FIVE YEARS' RESIDENCE

IN

THE WEST INDIES.

—

VOL. II.

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THE WEST INDIES.

BY CHARLES WILLIAM DAY, ESQ.

AUTHOR OF "HINTS ON ETIQUETTE."

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

LONDON:

COLBURN AND CO., PUBLISHERS,

GREAT MARLBOROUGH STREET.

1852.

Notice is hereby given, that the Publishers of this work reserve to themselves the right of publishing a Translation in France.

LONDON:
Printed by Schulze and Co., 13, Poland Street.

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CHAPTER I.

JOURNEY ROUND THE ISLAND—IMPRACTICABLE ROAD—MILITARY VILLAGE — MORNE CALEBESSE — PERILOUS RIDE—PLAGUE OF GRASSHOPPERS—MADEMOISELLE JOSEPH—BANDE DE L'ESTE—RIVER SCENERY—MR. C.—POINT MAYORO — THREADING THE QUICKSANDS—M. ST. FERRIER.

I LEFT Port of Spain, on Friday, April 14th, to make what is called the tour of the island, that is, to go from the western coast to the Bande de l'Este, or eastern side, and from thence to the extreme south, crossing again directly to the north. From a variety of circumstances, this is a journey of considerable fatigue and some risk. The first stage is to Arima, sixteen miles. I was on horseback, having as a guide a trustworthy, clever, coloured man, on foot, who carried my *sac de nuit* on his head, for which service, to Naríva, forty-five miles, he was to receive six dollars, or one pound five shillings.

From St. Joseph's the mountains gradually dwindle

in height and boldness of form to Arima, where they subside into merely high ridges or spurs.

We passed Tacarigua and Arouca, two small villages, each having its church, and forded several rivers, composed of about a couple of feet of water running over a hard, gravelly soil, though in the rainy season they become impetuous torrents.

Near the last we saw a wooden cross, where, a few years ago, a planter, *en route*, was hacked to pieces by a negro footpad. A great number of ananás, or wild pine-apples, were growing by the road-side; but as these are invariably cut by the passing negroes a day or two before they are ripe, travellers like ourselves had no chance of improving the occasion. They are said, however, to be exceedingly well-flavoured.

About four miles from Arima, we entered the woods by a broad, rustic road, exactly like one of our English green lanes; and, gradually descending, came on Arima, a mere village of thatched cottages, lying in a hollow. In colonial phraseology, however, this is a town, and boasts a large Catholic church, and latterly an hotel! a long, low, thatched building, ominously like a shealing. The fare here is extremely bad, and the charges enormous. The charge for breakfast, composed of tea without milk, and Irish "mess beef," or junk, was seventy-five cents, or three shillings sterling. As I could not drink tea minus the milk, I was forced to have instead a bottle of ale as an extra, which brought the unsatisfactory meal up to a dollar, or four shillings and twopence. The reason assigned by Mister Lenahan,

the landlord, for not having two pennyworth of milk kept for contingencies like the present, was, that perhaps no customer might pass, and that generally speaking those who did pass, being managers and overseers of estates, cared nothing for milk. With one thing or another, my bait cost me one dollar forty-five cents, or five shillings and tenpence. To a continental traveller what a sum seven francs seems for a wretched meal!

Now came the real commencement of our journey, as all traces of civilization cease at Arima, which was fourteen miles distant from Turoure. The road, which continued through the woods was a wide track covered with grass, and intersected by foot-paths for eleven miles. Once only a few parrots flew screaming across our narrow strip of sky to relieve the monotony. "You hear dem parrots, Sar?" asked my guide; but as far as I could distinguish, they might as well have been bats or blackbirds. At last, when nearly worn out, we came to clearings of blackened stumps, the ground being strewn with the branches of trees. These were followed by patches of maize, which brought us to the foot of a steep bare hill, having on its summit a few huts, forming the village of Cuave. We reached our destination by dusk.

These isolated settlements in the depths of the forest are the grants made by the British Government to the 3rd West India Regiment for long service. They have also pensions. I went to the mansion of Sergeant Brooke, the head man of the place, and found a

neat and commodious mud-hut, covered with timmeet, one of the rough but efficacious thatches of the country. Sergeant Brooke is a negro of substance, who, with his sons, lives in a contiguous mud edifice, reserving for travellers the one in which we were domiciled. He furnishes the hungry wayfarer with a fowl, yams, a bottle of porter and a hammock, for which the understood consideration is two dollars. But it must not be overlooked, that the porter has to be carried on the head of a man, or at best on a mule, all the way from Port of Spain—thirty miles; and were it not for this accommodation, the traveller must sleep in the woods, and bring with him a sumpter horse to carry the indispensable supplies. The wilds of Trinidad are a long way from London, a fact that forces itself on one's notice in many ways.

The African settlement of Turoure stands on elevated ground, surrounded on all sides by the high woods. Art as well as Nature is primitive enough out here. There is, however, a Protestant church, and a recently-settled clergyman, who, I believe, is the only white man in the place.

Our apartment was spacious enough, but contained only a table and a form; and I slept in my clothes in a hammock, not a particularly refreshing mode of courting "Nature's soft nurse," after a ride of thirty miles. There were no bed-clothes, and to undress would have been but to tempt the bats—not by any means a chimerical danger here. Besides, the nights are apt to be cooler than is agreeable. Towards morn-

ing a furious rain for two hours rendered the continuance of our journey somewhat problematical, but at last it ceased; and after a cup of coffee, the horse was led out. I put my hand on his neck, but only to withdraw it the next instant, bedaubed with blood. "De bat suck um, Sar, in de night," explained my guide; and I found that this is a very common occurrence out here.

The morning looked fierce, and my guide had to inquire his way; for it turned out that he had only been the road once, and that was five-and-twenty years before, when quite a lad. Sergeant Brooke became eloquent on the necessity of employing a couple of men as guides through the woods, which we were about traverse, as the roads were "berry bad"—the expense would at least be three dollars. This, however, I thought to be a bit of negro humbug; so we set off by ourselves down the steep clayey hill, slippery with rain, and turned into the narrow foot-track; but a distance of a hundred yards convinced me of the impracticability of proceeding, at least for the time. The place was a swamp of deep clay, as tenacious as bird-lime, and was now thoroughly wetted by the early morning's rain. My horse plunged in and floundered through the first mud-hole of twenty feet in length, only to come to a worse a few yards beyond, so we turned despondingly back to wait, until the wet should be absorbed. This road, however, is never dry, even in the driest season, as the sun can scarcely penetrate

the dank solitudes surrounding it, so impervious is the broad-leaved foliage of the Tropics.

We returned, looking rather foolish, at having disdained the advice of the gallant Sergeant. After some discussion we were introduced to an old negro Peon, who was *en route* homeward to the place for which we were bound, and we hired him as a guide. Then for the first time I became aware that a gang of eight or ten were going to Morne Calebesse, they had hitherto kept out of sight, hoping that I should hire a couple of them, as if belonging to Turoure, in which case I must, of course, pay them more than if they were known to be merely going the same way. This little bit of negro cunning is perfectly characteristic of the race.

My man of the woods was a spare sinewy old fellow, wearing only a shirt and a pair of negro short drawers. He carried on his back an Indian "guayal," or pack, very ingeniously made. Under his guidance we plunged once again into the gloomy woods.

The distance from Turoure to Morne Calebesse is only eight miles, seven of which is swamp, developed in a continuous slough of wet clay, through which even foot-passengers plunge and struggle, literally up to the knees; whilst with a horse and his rider, as being so much heavier, the difficulty of proceeding is far greater. The poor animal plunges in, and to extricate his hind legs, is fairly obliged to put his nose into the mud, in order to kick them out; and this struggle continues virtually the whole seven miles, interrupted only by

difficulties of another nature, such as crossing six or seven rivers. The toil indeed is so serious, that after a continuous plunging for five minutes together, the poor brute absolutely groans and trembles, looking round at you with a most expostulating countenance.

The narrow track is thickly lined with the broad-leaved balazeau, each leaf after rain containing a small reservoir of water, which it dispenses most liberally on the woe-begone traveller. What with this ducking, and the coarse rush-like grass of the Tropics, the branches of trees and sundry other foliage, your boots are soaked through in five minutes. If one place is drier than another, it is the very edge of the slough, actually amongst the trees and bushes, when serious bruises and contusions are inevitable, as your horse dashes remorselessly amongst them; and the majority of tropical trees are furnished with thorns and prickles, which cannot be encountered with impunity. The buttons of your jacket get wrenched out of their covers, your whip is torn from your hand, and your closely-tied straw-hat is continually dragged off your head.

"Is there much more of this?" I inquired, after a desperate struggle through the mire.

"Why yes, massa," replied my negro, with a grin; "dem pretty much de same all de way!" And so indeed it proved.

We were soon overtaken by the gang of negroes, each of whom had a cutlass or a stout staff, by the aid of which he staggered manfully through the tenacious

mire. For me to have attempted in the worst places to aid the horse by dismounting, would have been madness, as boots and trowsers, once in the swamp, could never have been extricated; and to proceed negro fashion, bare-legged, would very soon have placed me *hors de combat*. I was, therefore, fain to stick in my saddle as I best might, and lash the horse through all sorts of impassable places. Once in every quarter of an hour we came to some enormous tree, with all its branches blocking up the road; and this could only be passed by a *détour* through the woods. At another point we would be stopped by some large trench which the horse could not pass, and then we would have to make a second circuit.

A journey of a mile brought us to a sharp ascent of clay, of perhaps fifty yards in height, followed by a steep slippery descent almost impending over a brown sluggish river, margined by deep mud. The only vestige of a bridge being a log of wood, I was obliged to dismount and crawl over, whilst the guides attended to the horse, which was stripped of its bridle, and hauled across by a rope, fastened securely round its neck.

By this time, I found that I was fairly in for a long and dangerous ride, which, however, I shall summarily describe as a succession of small ravines, each having its brown, muddy river, so slow as to seem stagnant, with dismal swamps between. Sometimes the streams were branches of larger ones, but several were main rivers. On the opposite bank of one we saw the gang

of negroes encamped, evidently in full expectation that some contingency or other would befal me in crossing, which would bring their services into requisition. At this river we found the remains of a once substantial wooden bridge, the supports of which on one side had all given way, so that it hung slanting over the Stygean waters, and would certainly have given way under my horse. Dismounting, I tried it with my foot, as a rope-dancer establishes the proper tension of his *corde élastique*, and found it exceedingly shaky. The body of negroes cried with one voice, "Ha, Massa, don't do dat, or him fall for true." Mustering my resolution, however, I skipped on to the plank and got safely across, breathing much more freely when on the opposite bank. The horse had the usual allowance of tugging and hooting, mud and water, but at last was got over.

Even my Peons had hard work of it; my town man had my capacious carpet-bag on his head, and the Morne Calebesseite, his heavy guayal; but both men did their devoir bravely. Often when the road was "too much bad," we left it altogether, and for half a mile traversed the deep woods, full of all sorts of obstacles to an equestrian, though they were easily avoided by the more compact and agile man on foot. At length I began to get dreadfully tired of sticking upright on the back of a horse, traversing a blind road the blank sinuosities of which no one could anticipate for three minutes together. It was like facing a brick-

wall that receded at one's approach. Left two minutes to ourselves, I and my servants would inevitably have been lost, but the old Peon led us through the apparently trackless forest with the unerring sagacity of a dog. I dared scarcely to look around me, as the most unceasing vigilance was necessary to avoid bruising myself against the trees; and every moment I was obliged to fend off their trunks by main force, to prevent being jammed. Still there was much to interest the contemplative observer as he passed along. The vegetable cordage, and the innumerable parasitic plants which canker each tree, or hide their trunks with a shower of thread-like pendants, enchained the eye at every step. Neither monkeys, nor serpents, nor any living thing crossed our path, though occasionally the ear was saluted by a *hoo-ope;* and a yell, like the "coo-oo," of the Australians, announced the approach or proximity of wayfarers; in many cases, a man and woman, all negroes, carrying on their heads large bundles. We were overtaken and passed by three Follah priests, who had literally "girded up their loins," and with stout staves, floundered through the deep tenacious clay of the swampy path.

At one time I thought we were to be drenched with rain, as I heard a pattering sound on the broad leaves of the wild plantain, or balazeau. It proved, however, to be a cloud of small grasshoppers, which my guide informed me, "kill ebery ting—eat um all up." And, certainly the leaves were quickly stripped to their

fibres, exhibiting the most unmistakable evidence of the devastation of these voracious insects.

So bad is this road, that horses frequently die in consequence of the fatigues they undergo, and many have been so strained as never thoroughly to recover. We were six hours and a half doing eight miles, and when at length we did emerge from the woods, neither myself nor my attendant could have found our road back again, even for a mile. The swamp continued up to the very foot of the hilly ridges on which the settlement of Morne Calebesse is placed, and glad enough were we when at one P.M., the first hut of the village appeared. Dirty, wet, torn and bruised, I rode up to the hovel of Mademoiselle Joseph, a stout half-naked negress, who, in her primitive fashion, affords travellers board and lodging. We were the first arrivals, and it was not for twenty minutes after, that, dropping in one by one, the squad of negroes and priests made their appearance, bespattered with mud in a ludicrous matter.

Morne Calebesse is not a town, and can hardly be styled a village, being a settlement of pensioned negro soldiers. The huts are strictly isolated, each on its own little hill, and surrounded by provision-grounds, and all the requirements of negro life. They are of the rudest description, and thatched with timmeet, a rugged looking, but most effective covering. Before the *maison* of Mademoiselle Joseph, lay seven or eight lean, lank, Wallahoon hunting dogs, in appearance the veriest curs, but fierce and bold in the forest.

At home, they have a very sinister leer; and as they do not bark, but spring upon a person at once, they must be approached with caution by strangers. A levy of naked nigger children lay sprawling and squabbling in the dirt. Old men and young were furbishing up their weapons for the chase; and altogether, the scene was as barbarous as the veriest lover of woodcraft could desire. We obtained some broiled quank, which was bad enough, but with the addition of some indifferent yams and a bottle of poor ale, we managed to recruit ourselves. For this refreshment, our hostess demanded a dollar, but was satisfied to take three shillings.

The soil about here is said to be exceedingly rich, and Morne Calebesse lies high enough to command a view over the eternal forest, though not of the sea, from which it is only three miles and a half distant.

After a rest of an hour and a half, we started into the woods once more, to make our way to the beach. Here, however, the forest was dry, and there was only one river to cross, though it proved to be the worst of all. I got over on a log, the bank being thirty feet above the water. The horse, when fairly across, was dragged back up to his crupper in the mud, and, after three efforts to rise, was each time sucked back. Both the men tugged at him; but so firmly was he fixed, that the last time, exhausted by the struggles he had made, his neck fell over, and his head went under the water. I thought he was now gone, but, fortunately, he made one final effort, and, covered with mud, scrambled on to the bank. This was our last danger,

and five o'clock found us on the beach of Bande de l'Este, on the windward side of the island.

"How far have we to go," I now inquired of my Peon, "in order to get to Mr. C——?"

"Oh, berry little way; you soon dere—not more dan a mile."

It proved to be upwards of five long dreary miles. As I could now dispense with my auxiliary guide, I offered my old man a dollar for his services; but he demanded two, swearing that such was the regular price. Now as he did not come express, but was merely *en route*, this, if true, was no criterion, and therefore I would not give more than a dollar and a quarter, or five shillings and threepence. I afterwards found that the regular price, with a heavy load on the head or back from Mr. C——'s place, to Turoure, was one dollar, and from thence to Port of Spain another dollar, making two dollars in all for forty-five miles, heavily laden.

Much is said in Trinidad about the surpassing beauty of the beach of Bande de l'Este; but it is nothing *per se*, and its only peculiar charm arises from the relief of coming suddenly on a fine open space, and the fresh air, after having been so many hours in the dense, suffocating woods. To our left, five miles off, lay Point Manzanilla, a headland of no great height; while on our right was Point Mayoro. In front, lines of breakers curled their monstrous heads, and the never-ceasing spray raised a dense mist along the whole coast, which, from seaward, is

unapproachable. The beach was of broad and firm sand, and just above high-water mark was for many miles bordered with a double row of cocoa-palms, forming a perfect avenue.

I hobbled slowly along, as my nag was thoroughly tired. We crossed two swift clear streams, only a foot or so deep, and by six o'clock, or sun-down, reached the cocoa-nut oil establishment of Mr. C——, well and hospitably known to every traveller passing this way. As I had previously made his acquaintance, I was relieved from the awkwardness of riding up to demand shelter of a stranger; and indeed had been some time before invited to Narîva. Mr. C—— reigns absolute over many miles of coast, most of the neighbouring negroes being in his employ.

We found Narîva House, like the abode of Robinson Crusoe, surrounded by numerous flocks of goats, and herds of pigs and cows. Behind the house runs the Narîva, a salt-water river, broad, and in some places four and a half fathoms deep. It abounds with manatees, gropers, sting-rays or skate, oysters, and huillas or large water snakes, nor is it wholly free from sharks. These marine dainties are generally captured with a harpoon. The Narîva is bordered with tall mangrove-trees, and debouches into the sea about two miles from Mr. C——'s house.

The grand feature of the Narîva, are the manatees or sea-cows, a species of walrus, I believe, about which little is known by naturalists, and consequently many absurd exaggerations on the subject are in circulation.

All that I could glean was, that the animal has no feet, but only two flippers, by which it is enabled to drag its head and shoulders out of the water, holding on by the roots of the mangrove-trees, on the leaves of which it feeds. If shot at and wounded, it invariably sinks in the deep water, and is lost, but may be captured by the harpoon, as if struck, the cord to which the harpoon is fastened serves as a tow rope, and it is thus secured. The bull is described as particularly fierce and dangerous. It often weighs from four hundred to four hundred and fifty pounds; and the flesh, which is greatly prized, is in flavour said to be between veal and pork.*

I visited the river in company with the two sons of Mr. C——, to try for a manatee. As we advanced further up, I found it a deep, solemn river, buried in mangrove forests, which flung their umbrageous shadows over the dark-green sluggish stream. When arrived at the proper spot, our boat was noiselessly sculled down, whilst one of the lads stood in the bow, his harpoon poised, ready to dart at any piscatorial game that might offer. We saw two manatees at a distance, making a slight blowing, like a porpoise, their black heads, as they came up to breathe, being quite visible. We "gave way," lustily with the oars; but they had taken the alarm, and were steering out

* I was informed by Harry Lumez, that, when salted, he had often passed it off on his "buckra" friends as ham. He added: "I would at all times give a doubloon, or sixteen dollars (three pounds si shillings and eightpence) for one."

to sea, which breaking over the bar at the mouth of the river, placed an obstacle to our further pursuit. Next day we made another attempt to capture one, but with no better success. This I regretted exceedingly, as I was desirous of making an accurate drawng of one for scientific purposes, so rarely do persons qualified for such a task visit these regions.

Our divers got some oysters of a very large size from the roots of the mangroves. They were very good raw, but as sauce were tough and flavourless.

On the Sunday evening a negro brought in a large monkey that he had just shot. The poor animal was *in articulo mortis,* and as life was ebbing, its spasms and convulsive contortions, were too like humanity not to be painful to witness. It was about three feet in height; and had a black face, and bright mahogany-coloured hair.

"How can you treat your relation so?" asked Mr. C——. At this the negroes, as if feeling complimented at the insinuation of a family connection, all grinned. I was politely asked if I should like to have the monkey cooked for dinner, but after witnessing the death agony, I declined. As "game," monkeys are valued by the negroes at half a dollar each. There is a light grey monkey here, which I did not see.

The windward coasts of all the West India islands are extremely healthy, the easterly, or trade-wind, blowing strongly at all times. For this very reason the windward coasts are, if not abandoned, at least very sparingly inhabited, the sea being for commercial

purposes, or even for fishing, all but useless. Occasionally a drogher comes round to take the produce of the planter or oil manufacturer; but it is done at great inconvenience and some risk, so heavy is the surf. The drogher that carries the oil of Mr. C—— to Port of Spain cannot approach nearer to the establishment than Point Manzanilla, ten miles off. All the capitals, or commercial towns in the West Indies are on the leeward side of the islands, generally on the lowest and least salubrious spots.

Mr. C—— rents the cocoa-nuts of twelve miles of beach, besides a large tract of forest land, much of which he has cleared. This is the secret of the immense quantity of live stock congregated near the house, which graze in the cleared forest, or are fed on the refuse cocoa-nut, after it has passed through the mill; a food which even horses and dogs eat with avidity, and which is very nutritive. Mr. C—— reckons that his pigs alone bring him in an income of one thousand five hundred dollars a-year, or three hundred pounds sterling. He has a store, the only one for many miles, so that but little cash passes between master and man, the truck system being in full operation. The annual value of each cocoa-nut-palm, when I visited the place in 1848, was estimated at two dollars fifty cents, or ten shillings and five-pence. At Naríva, a steam-engine was at work to crush the nuts, and the concern was prospering, although for several years previously it had failed to pay its expenses.

I left Narîva, after a stay of three days, for Mayoro, ten miles south. Mr. C—— kindly brought me down the river to the *embouchure* in his boat, and landed me on the opposite beach, where horses were in waiting. The road, as far as the Ortoire river, five miles, was along the sea-beach, which, for a sea-beach, certainly is magnificent. The sands are broad and firm, and thickly strewn with that curious polypus (*Physalia*), or "Portuguese men-of-war," here fairly stranded, its beautifully serrated pink and blue bladders standing at their full tension, and exploding sharply as onr horses trod on them. At Mr. C——'s it was my wicked diversion to walk along the beach, pen-knife in hand, and puncture each air-bladder, when it instantly collapsed. However, no harm was done, as the animal was clearly "wrecked," and could never get to sea again. The avenue of cocoa-nuts continued the whole way, and the gaps were filled up with the sea-side grape.

The Ortoire is one of the longest and deepest rivers in the island, being at its mouth about thirty yards across. It debouches at the basin of Point Mayoro, at which we had now arrived. We hailed a ferryman, who came over in a most ticklish *corrial*, or shallow Indian canoe. I have "swum in a gondola," danced over the Bosphorus in a caique, and handled an oar in a Thames wherry, but for insecurity a corrial beats them all. Here I took leave of my kind host, and got into the canoe, squatting down on my heels, with a hand on either gunwale (*secundem artem*), and thus,

without daring to move, was spooned over. The horses were driven into the river and made to swim across. As the friend of Mr. C——, I paid nothing for my passage; but the usual charge for a *white* traveller is a shilling, and as much for the horse if towed. Negroes pay much less.

We had now to cross Point Mayoro to the beach beyond, and at once began to ascend, passing cottages and fields of maize, yams, plantains, and all the other vegetable products of the country. From the top of the hill, two hundred feet, we had a good view over the country towards Arima, and a sight of Mount Tamina, the great central isolated hill of Trinidad, the base of which, in fact, we had, though at some distance, been skirting all the way from Arima, notwithstanding that the hill itself, from the continual interposition of forest, was invisible. A ride of a mile brought us over Point Mayoro to the beach beyond, and we soon arrived at Beau Séjour, to the manager of which, Monsieur L. Deverteuil, I had a letter; and though it had jolted out of my pocket *en route*, it was picked up and brought to the house about an hour afterwards by a black boy. Meanwhile, I had been most kindly received by Monsieur Deverteuil, and his agreeable wife, a young gentlewoman educated at Toulouse, but now doing penance out here, far from all the *agrémens* of civilized society. Monsieur L. Deverteuil is brother to Dr. Deverteuil, of Port of Spain, of whom I have already made honourable mention.

Beau Séjour,* which belongs to Mr. G——, of Port of Spain, is situated on a hill, and commands an extensive view. Behind the house flows the Ortoire, which, like the Naríva, has its manatees, its gropers, and other monster fishes. Beyond the Ortoire is the deep forest, abounding in lap, quank, deer, and other tropical game. Two quarrees of land, on any well-selected spot, would yield a skilful, industrious man an ample supply of all the necessaries of life; yet planters, instead of turning ground to account, will persevere in cultivating sugar to their loss.

I remained but one night at Beau Séjour, and left in the morning for Guiyaguiyare Bay, on the southern coast, opposite the Oronoco. The road for eight miles, to Point Galeotta, still lay along the beach, and the same avenue of cocoa-palms overshadowed us. But the coast was not, as heretofore, uninhabited. A little back from the beach, snugly ensconced in groves of cocoa-palms and plantains, lay innumerable negro huts, forming a perfect line of habitations. It was a ride of six miles to the cliffs, and we were to be at their base before nine o'clock, when it would be low-water, as when the sea is up there is no passage. The water is down only half an hour, and there are some bad places to pass, absolute quicksands, but fortunately they are not many yards in width. I warned Jacob,

* This estate has since been abandoned, or has passed into other hands; sharing the universal ruin brought on these ill-used colonies, by he false principles of shallow legislators at home.

who carried my *sac de nuit* on his horse, of the danger, and of the necessity there was of being punctual. He had never been beyond Beau Séjour, but we knew that once past the cliffs, a road through the woods led us across the little peninsula of Point Galeotta.

The horse I rode, Mr. C——'s own, was a sagacious old traveller, as easy to ride as an arm-chair, and he ambled along Spanish fashion, getting fast over the ground, and leaving Jacob far behind, a mere dot on the sand. I reached the critical point exactly at nine o'clock, by which time Jacob, instead of being at my heels, was quite out of sight. Such are negroes, who stop and gossip with every one they meet. The cliffs are of earth, and at high water the breakers thunder up to their base, washing it with surf. The beach is bold, running down abruptly into the sea. But once under the heights, there was no time to consider anything but how to push along. The sand was partly composed of minute fragments of shells, in which the horse began to sink fetlock deep, and to plunge forward or aside rather violently, each footprint filling with water *instanter*. From this I saw that we were on a quicksand, and I applied the whip, when a few irregular bounds brought us through. I looked out for some place of escape in case of being caught by the tide. There were spots upon which it would be possible to scramble and take up the horse also, keeping out of danger, but not beyond a very foolish-looking position perched up for some hours, the sea

snarling at you all the while, and the sharks gnashing their teeth with rage at your escape. Hurrying on, I met two negresses, and accosted them in hopes of learning the road through the wood; but negro French is unintelligible even to a Frenchman. I made out something about *un petit chemin dans le bois*, but that already I knew. Still proceeding, I came to some suspicious-looking dark-grey mud, quite wet, and then the coarse sand again, in which the horse began to flounder and look frightened, at each step sinking deeper. A lash made him bound forward with a half-neigh, half-groan—a very intelligible announcement of danger, and we were once more on *terra firma*. I now pushed on as fast as possible, and the horse seemed to be sensible of the emergency too, for he stepped out most willingly. I left the cliffs at last, and attained the wood, but in no part could I discover any path or the slightest indication of one. Twice I carefully traversed the whole length of ground, beach-ward, and then, believing that the proper point must be beyond, I passed under another high earthen cliff, coming suddenly on another quicksand. In the midst of this were the remains of a huge tree, blanched white with the rain of years, and my horse resolutely refused the spot that I had selected for a passage, dashing up landward, and bringing me, at great peril to my head and knees, amongst the dangerous vertical branches of the tree, which I was obliged by main force to fend off as we rushed past. There was still one more pass, only a little less dangerous, and I

quickly found myself under the crags of the headland, with but a few yards between me and the sea. I saw that, should the rising tide overtake me, I should now be caught in a regular *cul de sac*, and no place to fly to. Here certainly there could not be a path, so I hurried back, the horse by this time being quite on the *qui vive*, and eager to escape from so awkward a locality. I saw at a great distance a man on foot come forward for a few seconds, and then disappear. I called to him, but heard no sound in answer. The two bad places had to be repassed, but it was now done with an assurance of assistance, and I went through each helter-skelter; and on the other side of the treacherous cliff I found Jacob. "You bin gone too far," he cried; "you pass the paff," and this was all he vouchsafed to say. He then somewhat sulkily remounted, and bringing me to the wood entered a track which I certainly never should have discovered myself, so thoroughly was it hidden from buckra ken. He had met the same two women with whom I had spoken, and what had been unintelligible to me, afforded him good information.

We now left the Bande de l'Este coast, and a ride of a quarter of a mile through the wood brought us out on Guiyaguiyare, a lovely bay on the southern coast, seven miles in breadth, where all was calm and tranquil—no boisterous wind, no furious sea, only a gentle ripple on the hard flat sand. The beach was bounded by groves of cocoa-palms, and strewn with their trunks, uprooted by the winds, so superficial a

hold have roots in arenaceous soil. We rode along the sands three miles, to seek out a certain Touce St. Ferrier, to whom I had been recommended by a coloured friend, Harry L——, the grandee of these parts. Inquiring as we went along, I crossed a shallow river, and, after all, went half a mile beyond the place; when I met a *quasi* white, who civilly conducted me to the right opening, which, unassisted, no stranger could by any sign have discovered. A tortuous path through a dense grove of cocoa-palms led us to the foot of a hill, where, perched up sixty feet, yet quite invisible from the beach, stood Malgré Tout, the house we sought. We arrived about eleven o'clock A.M., and I was civilly welcomed by M. St. Ferrier, a coloured man, with his wife and family, with whom I was to remain until the morrow, Good Friday, when my friend, Mr. Harry, was to send his canoe to fetch me to his own place, Moruga, twenty-four miles distant.

CHAPTER II.

POINT GALEOTTA—THE THREE PEAKS—MORUGA—PRINCE HARRY — EXCURSION ON THE RIVER — NEGRO VIANDS — SAVANNA GRANDE—GINGER HILL—AMERICAN NEGROES — THE DEVIL'S WOOD-YARD—MOUNT STEUART—RETURN TO PORT OF SPAIN.

POINT GALEOTTA is uninhabited; but almost concealed amongst groves of cocoa-palms and plantains, are several huts, each in its own snug "canook,"* and containing altogether, as far as I could understand, about fifty adults. It was once proposed to build a town on the shores of this beautiful bay, and the lots were surveyed and even purchased; but somehow or other, the project fell to the ground. The sea is extremely shallow, whilst at high water it literally washes the base of the cocoa-palms which line the beach; consequently, for some time every day, the only road is impassable. When the tide is out, the sands are magnificent; but there are rocks and

* *Conucas*, canook-u-d, nook. (Query?)

reefs all about, and a tiresome and dangerous communication only is open with the capital either by sea or land. There is little surf, and every three or four families have a *seine* amongst them, so that when the tide is full, they fish from the beach and divide the take.

Could anything like European society be obtained here, what an exquisite locality would this be! The climate is salubrious, land costs but a trifle, and could be readily planted with cocoa-palms, which would yield abundance of oil, while stock of all kinds would be easily fattened upon the refuse of the nuts; a forest, abounding in capital game, is at hand, and a lovely sea, teeming with fish, is in front, bringing a fine healthy breeze to cool and refresh the air. *Au reste*, the energy of educated English people, so different from the supineness of ignorant creoles, would strike out walks and paths, and vistas in every direction, and create an infinity of other pleasures, that the barbarians here never dream of. All that would be wanting would be society, which could only be obtained by half a dozen cultivated families settling within a neighbourly distance.

The house at Malgré Tout is a mere hut, having roseau reeds for walls, with thatch of timmeet, and it is furnished in the rudest manner. I found the family, however, exceedingly kind and attentive; and though every external sign about the *ménage*—the scantily clothed children, and paucity of furniture, indicated extreme poverty, never, perhaps, were appearances

more deceptive. M. St. Ferrier has seventy fanegas * (four hundred and eighty-three acres) of very fine land,



two thousand cocoa-palms already planted and bearing, from which he annually expresses, with a rude wooden machine, one thousand gallons of oil, worth at present eight bits a gallon, or eight hundred dollars the whole —one hundred and sixty-five pounds sterling. Then he has cows, pigs, goats, fowls, dogs, and a horse; the keep of which does not cost him a *sou*, whilst every day his family make sufficient fresh butter for domestic purposes. Fish he has for the catching, close to the

* A "fanega" of land is two quarrees and fifteen hundredths.

door; whilst, within half a mile, the forest furnishes him with game of the most delicate eating; including maracoi (land turtle), lizard (a large species, not *guana*, but described as excellent food), and armadillo. Sometimes, said M. St. Ferrier, we have a profusion of everything—sometimes we have scarcely anything to eat. "But you have plenty of fowls," I remarked, "and need never want a meal whilst that is the case." "Oh yes," he replied; "but we never kill a fowl except when a stranger comes, and the children will not eat goat." So, in the midst of plenty, these people, from want of proper economy, will starve. What was the use of keeping a dozen goats or pigs if not to eat? Vegetables, however, are scarce, as, with the exception of plantains and bananas, they cannot be reared here, being devoured by ants as soon as they spring up. They have no cassava, and, consequently, there is no farinaceous bread; and yams and tanniers must be purchased. There is no store at Guiyaguiyare, though it has a population of fifty people. It is considered to be the extreme end of the island.

Of all the rich land belonging to M. St. Ferrier, scarcely an acre is cleared; much of that close to the house is underwood or jungle, but the greater part of this fine estate and rich soil is still the high woods. The reason is, that all the neighbourhood being quite independent of others, there is no one to labour, each family having sufficient occupation in working on its own grounds; and to bring negroes from a distance,

idle, worthless vagabonds, at four bits or two francs a day, would not do at all. "So," said M. St. Ferrier, "I and my boys (two young lads) must do what we can between us in the way of clearing, and planting cocoa-trees." Nevertheless, much of this necessity doubtless arises from the supineness and want of method of the unreflective coloured races. Jonathan, or even a British farmer, would have the land cleared in a twinkling.

My stay at the bay was during the last days of the Holy Week, so from ten o'clock A.M. of Wednesday until ten o'clock on Saturday, not a gun is allowed to be fired by the faithful, and an unoffending heretic like myself was condemned to short commons. Fortunately, I like fish, and a bottle of Madeira was obtained for my sole use. Whilst I remained, I found that my hostess resolutely declined sitting down at the table with her husband and myself, but dined afterwards with the children. On inquiry, I ascertained that this was *l'usage* here; the mistress, or other females of the house, never eat with strangers.

I passed Good Friday in lolling in a hammock, or sauntering listlessly about the beach, examining the trunks of the cocoa-palms, strewn in all directions along the sand. They are held in the arenaceous soil by mere fibres, and the wonder is that they do not fall with the first gust of wind. I tasted some cherries on a tree close to the house, as like ours in appearance as two peas, but perfectly flavourless, and having a double stone.

Early next morning my host was very busy furbishing up his fowling-piece, and the dogs began to get excited. At ten o'clock A.M., the interdict on fire-arms was to cease.

"So," said my host, "by the time that I get to the proper spot all will be right, and we may get a lap for dinner."

I was, however, not destined to share his sport, as my canoe arrived about noon, and at two P.M. I took my departure.

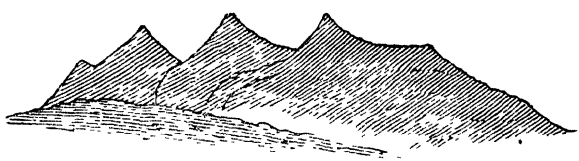
It was a fine boat, twenty-four feet in length, a "dug-out," *i.e.*, the bottom was formed of a single tree, raised upon. It carried a swinging mast, a rude sapling cut from the forest, with a lateen-cut sail, boomed out by another rude pole to an enormous extent over the water, and it was manned by three negroes. We got an offing, in order to weather Point Taillet, the western limb of the bay, and soon opened a long line of bold coast, precipices of earth, or "bluffs," with a range of low mountains, bristling with woods at a very short distance behind; but in consequence of a reef with only three feet of water on it, running along within a short distance, the coast is inaccessible; and though the land is of the richest quality, is quite uninhabited.

As we opened Point Galeotta, to the eastward, we began to feel the trade-wind, and surged along through a heavy sea. No sooner were we fairly under way, than two out of the three of our crew, after a hearty draught of new rum and water, coiled themselves away,

and went to sleep, leaving the negro captain at the helm. As negroes are proverbially careless, and the sea was heavy, our boom dipping every time the surge rushed under us, it was not very long before we broached to, an extremely disagreeable incident; and I began to wish myself ashore.

The same thing occurred twice; and as I knew, quite as well as any on board, what was doing, what should be done, and what should not, and as scarcely anything was done as it ought to be, I had rather an anxious time of it. Our captain was looking about him, instead of minding his helm, and watching the seas; and as, in case of any accident, we had sharks as well as water to contend with, to be with a negro crew, half-drunk and asleep, is not the most enviable position in the world. These lazy fellows had no idea of trimming a boat; and when the wind became scant, with a nasty cross sea, our voyage was unnecessarily retarded until after sundown.

Cape Cashepou is backed by three-peaked moun-



tains, which must have been the same that induced Columbus to name the island *Trinidada,* or the Trinity, as he came from the Oronoco round this

passage into the Gulfo-tristo, or of Paria; whilst on the northern coast, though much higher, there are not any mountains that can, by any possibility, be brought to bear into three peaks. I made a careful drawing of the trio, which I subsequently found Harry Lumez had of himself christened the "Three Sisters."

It was quite dark when we arrived at Moruga; and I had been given to understand that the landing was good upon the wharf, close to the house. What was my surprise to find us running into a surf, and grounding twenty yards from the beach! Whilst we were hard and fast, a breaker rushed past us three feet above the gunwale of the boat, and broke over us, burying us in foam, and drenching me from head to foot.

In this agreeable condition I was landed on the back of a man, and deposited on the beach; and my unhappy *sac de nuit* being an equal sufferer with myself, my whole wardrobe was wet through. The explanation given of this *mauvaise plaisanterie* by the half-drunken crew, was, "De boat not put in quite de right place, you see, Sar." Fortunately, however, we were near the house, and a change of clothes from my friend Harry, with a good dinner, quickly put matters *en règle*.

But at last I found myself at Moruga, the uttermost extremity, the most out-of-the-way place in the island, and in the palace of "Prince Harry," "de Gubnor" of a long, dreary line of coast. Harry

Lumez is the most popular creole in Trinidad, not a black, but pretty dark, with a countenance replete with goodness, and in which no evil passions can be traced. Nor does his moral character belie his physiognomy. He is perfectly unassuming, energetic, and, for a coloured man, reflective. He owns a fine estate, and a capital schooner of sixty tons. He is a magistrate, and is allowed to treat his people in his own way; besides which, he is founding a village close by with the praiseworthy intention of concentrating the scattered population.

"I dems doctor," he remarked to me; "I can't go to dem so far offs when dem's ill; dem hab a church here, and a parson (priest) and a *cool* (school), so dem moche better togedder, dan in dem canook."

So to those who give up their distant lands, he gives an equivalent here; and to the first five-and-twenty strangers who chose to settle, he sold lots of fifty feet frontage by one hundred feet depth, for five dollars, or a guinea, on the condition, however, that they built a house on their lots, within the first three months. The streets, which are to be at right angles with each other, are thirty-five feet broad, and the plan of building is to be adhered to *de rigueur;* and if carried out, as I have no doubt it will, some time or other it will be the nucleus of a large town. Harry has great friends, and when in town, constantly dines at Government House, where the most marked attention is paid to

him by all who know him. The truly excellent Governor, Lord Harris, personally assisted him to lay out his town; and supported him besides in every official way in founding St. Felicity. The principal street appropriately bears the name of "Rue Harris." Politically considered, it will be a most desirable focus of comparative civilization. It is a mile only from a deep river abounding in fish, and navigable for boats for twelve miles into the interior, and is close to a salubrious sea-shore, while a road will speedily be opened through the dense forest to Savanna Grande, and communication thus be established with Port of Spain.

The community at the village is Roman Catholic, though there is as yet no church. Once in three months, however, a priest comes over from the Mission of Savanna Grande, to marry, christen, and confess. How burials are managed I had no opportunity of ascertaining, though before I left Moruga, we had the advantage of the society of the worthy Irish Padre.

We strolled along the beach to the Moruga river, a mile and a half, in order to eat oysters, for which the place is celebrated. The boat was sent round by sea to take us up the river, in order that I might obtain some glimpses of the scenery. The necessary supplies in the shape of wine, punch, and so forth, were dispatched by a coolie; but Harry forgot one most important auxiliary to the outfit—an oyster-knife, so the coolie had to return to the house for one.

The boat arrived, and with its crew was sent up the river to collect oysters. This is done by first feeling for them with the feet, and then diving in five or even nine feet water, those being the finest that attach themselves to the extremity of the mangrove suckers, far under water. A load was soon obtained; but the coolie had not yet come back, and my splendid clasp-knife was put in requisition to open the oysters, getting handsomely notched in the service. We sat down in an old moses-boat, in the somewhat foul-smelling black mud, on the shore of the river, and set to work; and certainly the oysters proved to be delicious, while the wine and punch were admirable. While discussing the feast we were highly amused by witnessing a little domestic scene amongst the black crabs, which swarmed on the mud. No sooner was an oyster-shell thrown down, that it was pounced upon by one of these crustaceous marauders; and the manner in which it fed itself so daintily with its scarlet claws was, as the Americans would say, "quite a caution." Then when another crab came down to dispute the prize, the way the intruder was repelled, enhanced the interest and singularity of the spectacle.

We embarked on the Moruga river, and were switched up by the tide two miles and a half in a very short time. The scenery, composed chiefly of mangrove-trees, was extremely monotonous. The banks of the river were mud, and formerly were bordered by manchineel-trees, but at night the negroes were accustomed to cut off the branches and fling them into the

river in order to poison the fishes, conceiving that they then became an easier prey. Harry, therefore, had these trees cut down.

On landing, we found the coolie had brought the horses, but still no oyster-knife; and it subsequently appeared that he had gone back to the house, and said nothing about the knife, but instead, announced that he was to receive two glasses of rum for himself! His apology was, that he had forgotten the name of the article sent for, and, as the day was hot, he thought himself entitled to the rum. This is but one instance of the unceasing frauds practised constantly by both coolies and negroes, every hour of the day, in a large establishment.

Master Harry, however, has, as a domestic servant, a coolie woman, who is civil and intelligent; though understanding but a few words of creole French. "I like she better dan dem niggars," he said to me; "dem tief every ting." So much for a dark man's opinion of his own race!

Harry Lumez works his estate cheaply; and it is flourishing. The produce is divided between cocoa groves and canes. It is curious that the cocoa-palm will not thrive here, but after three or four years dwindles and dies, though the cabbage-palm grows luxuriously. One in the front of the house is ninety feet in height, and is the tallest known in the island. Altogether, Henry Estate is a picturesque spot. The sea washes the base of the undulating earthy cliffs, on which the house is built sixty feet above it; whilst

inland, the bright green canes, with the tall dark forest behind, form a rich bit, materially assisted by lofty caratte trees,* the foliage of which, at a distance, resolves itself into a right Catholic Maltese cross.

Between Moruga and Guiyaguiyare, deep hidden in the woods somewhere behind Cape Cashepou, is a place called the Lagoon Bouffe, where, by report, are the most curious mud volcanoes in Trinidad. But as no horse could make its way to the spot, and it required at least three men to cutlass a path to it, and as, moreover, I should have had to walk twelve miles there and twelve back, I felt myself unequal to accomplish so arduous an undertaking. To a European, a twenty-four miles walk through a tropical forest is no joke.

At certain seasons the rare and curious *conca veneris* is found upon this beach. This was not the right time, but we found plenty of their fragments. The air, at this period, was filled with the shrill screams of a species of locust, which begins its peculiar noise gradually, and increases its vibrations to an astounding intensity; at a little distance, the note exactly resembled the whistle of a rail-road engine.

I was now at the head-quarters of creole cookery, and the *cuisine* of the coloured races; and although I do not intend, like poor Colonel Capadoce, to make

* This is a different species from the caratte-bush, the branches of which are used as thatch.

breakfasts and dinners the leading characteristic of my book, some things here were so very odd, and our meals throughout were so thoroughly West Indian, as to be worthy of a passing notice.

Turtle there was of course, in every form of soup, steak and joint, *daube*, since Master Harry has a well-stocked turtle-pen, or preserve, close to the house. One day we had maracoi, or land-turtle, of which Harry has also always a stock in hand, and very good it was. Cheep-cheep, a species of mussel found here in such abundance on the sea-shore, that in half an hour the merest child can gather enough for a hearty meal, is a most excellent dish. The gathering of cheep-cheep is indeed one of the daily occupations of young negro girls when living near the beach. This meal wound up with lap-bucanneé. As to vegetables, we had cous-cous, roast plantains, yams, and that very odd, but common West Indian dainty, pigeon-peas.

"You hab some breads?" I was asked.

"If you please; but where is it? I don't see any!"

"De breads is close to you—dere yams, tanniers, cous-cous, plantain, plenty."

These were the "breads" of our worthy host; our wheaten bread is not cared for by creoles. A little, however, was obtained for my especial use in the village.

Breakfasted *à la fourchette* at ten A.M., on a variety of odd-looking dishes.

"What are these?" I inquired.

"Dems very good; you try dem."

"What—why they're gru-gru-worms! a dish-full *fried!*"

This is a white grub, an inch and a half long, as fat as a bloated lap-dog, having a large black head. They breed in the gru-gru palm. I had often heard of them; but never thought that I could bring myself to eat a "roasted maggot," and now came the trial. I cut off the black head as large as a swan-shot, and nearly as hard, and making a desperate effort, ate one, and felt very qualmish. But, divesting oneself of prejudice, it really wss very good, though a glass of claret was necessary to keep it down. I tried another grub, and then another, and altogether managed to swallowed half a dozen, and felt that I had achieved a feat. The priest, who was at table, looked on in silence. He had not moral courage enough to try one: the worst of the gru-gru worm, is the head, which I believe even the creoles can scarcely manage. I took something fried in slices like liver, crisp but of a horribly mawkish flavour.

"What's this?" I asked.

"You like um? dat very good—dat *sheep's blood, fried!*"

"Um! I'll take some more claret!"

Gru-gru grubs and sheep's blood, both on the same morning, required something stronger than claret to make them agreeable.

Dessert is never seen on a West India table, albeit pines are so plentiful, and Harry has a profusion of very fine oranges close to his door. They are very

large, sweet, and juicy, though having an exceedingly thick rind. There is another fruit here, the exterior of which is like a pomegranate; it is of the sour-sop tribe, and is called cashemar.

From Henry estate, the extremely low coast of the Oronoco can be seen with a telescope. It is only about seven miles distant; and in the winter, or rainy season, the Wallahoon Indians often come over in their corrials to work a few days for HarryLumez. They bring for sale dogs, and chinchorros, or grass hammocks. They work very well for a few days, but get tired. They sleep in the woods; and behave very peaceably.

One most disagreeable thing in the West Indies, is the intrusion of the negro estate labourers into the house at all hours, and improper seasons. They have no delicacy whatever; and you no sooner attempt to sit down comfortably to a meal, than two or three woolly sconces appear, watching you at the door or through the window. Frequently they come quite into the room on some frivolous errand or complaint, and are extremely pertinacious, requiring a good rating before they will retreat.

Whilst staying at Moruga, Master Harry's 'Goletta,' a fine schooner of sixty tons, new measurement, arrived. We went on board in the moses-boat, in company with Harry and two hogsheads of sugar. The sea was heavy, and the boat deep and leaky; and after twice baling her out during the passage of a mile from the beach, we arrived alongside one-third full of water. Here two hands, one a young negro, of

herculean proportions, were ordered to bale out; but the Hercules, instead of paying the slightest attentions to the injunctions, stood gnawing a sugar-cane. When remonstrated with by the Captain, the insolent answer was:

"Go to h—ll with your ship. I go on shore; I won't work any more."

Such is the state of insubordination of the negroes in Trinidad.

The habit of gnawing the sugar-cane, which they steal, is universal amongst negroes: man, woman and child will be seen stripping the silicated rind with their teeth, and this idle, gormandizing habit supplies the place of thinking with this mindless race. At last it made me quite nervous to look at them.

On the Saturday morning, at nine o'clock, I set off through the woods for Savanna Grande, *en route* homewards, on a fine horse, and with a careful guide, who carried my *sac* in a guiyal on his back, besides a grand hunk of turtle, as substantial as any meat could be, with bread, limes, a pint of sherry, and a flask of brandy—for there is no going into the woods unprovided. In my pocket I carried my trusty clasp-knife, a leathern cup for drinking, a corkscrew and a flint and steel, with a supply of amadou, since no one knows what may happen; and a fall or a broken leg in these deep, solemn woods, ten or twelve miles from all assistance, would be no light calamity. The distance from Moruga to the Mission of Savanna Grande, is computed at twenty-six miles, though I

should doubt it being more than sixteen, as the crow flies. Nothing extraordinary befel during my journey. The ground was undulating; and we had to cross in the usual manner two rivers composed of the same abominable mud, and dark brown, unwholesome-looking water, in a deep ravine. We heard the scream of the parrots, and the howlings of monkeys, which at first I mistook for the barkings of dogs, until a moment's reflection satisfied me that dogs were not likely to be there.

In the centre of the woods is a hill, called Ginger Hill, from the quantities of wild ginger which in the season grow here. The land is of a very fine quality, and when the state of the population permits these forests to be cleared, it will be a fine site for a central city. But when will that good time come?

We passed several huts, made by the Wallahoon Indians, when they visited Trinidad from the Spanish Main. These domiciles are merely a few poles, ingeniously arranged, however, and over the poles a few caratte branches are thrown. Nothing astonishes a European out here more than to see with what facility natural productions are found as substitutes for things that we have been brought up to consider of necessity as works of art. Flags plucked from the forest do good service as rope. The woven baskets of the Caribs, at St. Vincent, hold water as well as a new pail. A set, however, is very expensive, and cost fifty dollars, or ten guineas.

For two hours of our journey we were exposed to rain, and emerged from the high wood about half-past

three P.M., wet through, and covered with mud. Here we came on the village, which was still six miles from the settlement. It is inhabited by American negroes, who ran away from their masters and joined the British, in 1814. Twice during the day I saw something dart across the road, but so quickly as to be unable to distinguish what it was. Those alone who are constantly traversing the woods occasionally see monkeys or serpents. As a general rule, it is a privilege to be enabled to walk about barefooted in these wilds, although it has its inconveniences. For instance, my man was delayed by running a piece of sharp wood between his toes, where it made a pretty handsome hole. In these countries, however, clothes are the shackles of civilization; and the more one can manage to dispense with them the better.

We ultimately arrived at the dwelling of the Reverend Mr. E——, the Protestant rector of the Mission of Savanna Grande, and found part of the family to be old acquaintances. They were all on the point of sitting down to dinner, and I joined them, after a change of shoes, but in a splendidly muddy shirt, and trowsers quite *hors de combat*, whilst within the Tropics anything like a waistcoat is an absurdity, to be used only at Governors' parties. The Rectory was the nearest *point d'appui* to the mud volcanoes, known as the Devil's Wood-yard, five or six miles off to the eastward, and which I wished to visit whilst the season was still dry, as in the wet season the place is inaccessible, lying, as it does, in the woods.

My guide of the previous day, who was to have accompanied me, pleaded lameness from his wounded foot, so he commissioned a huge, scowling, brutal negro as a substitute, a service which, after a good deal of bargaining, the fellow agreed to undertake for six bits, two more than he could have gained for a hard day's work. The plea was that it was Sunday, which solemn day he would only have spent in strolling about, with two dogs at his heels.

We passed along a crest of hills, having some beautiful points of view. It does create a sort of sigh to see such spots in the possession of a race of negroes, who care nothing whatever for scenery. We came to a Protestant school-house, from a hill behind which there is a fine view over the immense forests. Here my guide persuaded two idlers like himself to join him, without at all consulting my wishes on the subject. However, in the woods, perhaps, the more the merrier, is a sound axiom, and I did not express my dissent.

We left the crest of the hill for the level ground, one hundred and fifty feet below us, and shortly entered the woods, I leading the way; for the negroes, instead of going first, as they should have done, lagged behind, "larking" with each other. From the numerous hunters' paths in all directions, these woods are very embarrassing, and even dangerous to strangers, and should never be attempted without a guide, thoroughly acquainted with the place. Such will point out the right track in a moment, when, to a stranger,

every place seems alike, and all semblance to a path ceases. A naval officer once volunteered to lead a party to these volcanoes, quite confident in his skill to take the bearings. They found the place without any difficulty, but, in returning, missed their way, and divided, wandering about for several hours, exhausted and vexed, and cursing their own folly. One of the party left the affair to his horse, who proved himself a better navigator than the lieutenant, and brought his rider out of the scrape some time before the rest.

We crossed a ravine, having plenty of mud at the bottom; and about a mile and a half from the entrance of the wood, came suddenly on a bare circular space, of perhaps a hundred yards in diameter, having in its centre several heaps of mud, crater-like in form. As the ground was perfectly firm, we walked up to these mouths, which were quite quiescent, saving the recent marks of a gentle overflow, and a few bubbles, which occasionally rose. The principal crater might be four feet in height; the inferior ones from two to three feet and a half. The recent mud was of a rather delicate quakerish lilac colour, which dried into a light drab; and though only mud, it dried in so rock-like a form, so sharp and hard, that at a little distance it might easily be mistaken for stone. Each little crater, about a foot across, was filled with liquid mud, the consistence of the usual contents of a scavanger's cart, or of batter, as used to make pancakes. A slight, but very slight, odour of sulphur might be detected. Each crater had a pole stuck into it by the negroes of the neighbourhood, but for what purpose it would be diffi-

cult for a Caucasian to imagine. In attempting to pull out these poles, the suction was extremely great. The overflow of liquid mud would seem to be exceedingly slow—an oozing out, rather than anything else, though I have heard stories about its throwing out mud with such violence as to bespatter the tops of the surrounding trees; but this I suspect must be taken *cum grano salis*. Something also has been said about the tides having an effect upon it, a story that seems to have no foundation in fact. We, however, were there at low water: it is about fifteen miles in a straight line from the sea. The desiccated mud cracks all over, and a few rush-like sedgy tufts have begun to grow over the bare soil, whilst many llandas have crept out of the woods, and elongated themselves over the surface. The circle, which is perfectly well defined, is bounded by a regular hedge of shrubs, differing in every respect from the underwood of the overlooking forest. The Devil's Wood-yard is a favourite spot for marooning, and something has been even said about the volcano ejecting broken pottery. Alas! I believe the pottery that I saw to be only the fragments of gurglets broken in the carelessness of uproarious festivities. Altogether, it is a curious formation enough. The mud is perfectly cold; but from having seen a good deal of, and having even lived amongst, volcanoes,* I should be inclined to doubt its being excited by volcanic action at all.

Finally, I made a very accurate sketch of this "mud

* The writer lived forty-five days at Nicolosi, the highest village on Mount Etna, which mountain he ascended twice. Mount Vesuvius is only a marooning spot. He has seen both places under "fire."

volcano," an operation that made my three nigrotic followers expand their saucer-eyes, whilst the whisper of "him take de plan!" fell gently on my tympanum. I was glad to get back; for as there was no water to be obtained, my *eau-de-vie,* hard-boiled eggs, and bread, could not be made available.

Returning from the volcanoes, we met a party going there, who wished to be on the spot at the proper time, *i. e.,* high water. I subsequently fell in with one of these persons, who informed me, that they found the place at high water as quiescent as when I left it. I thought as much.

The Mission of Savanna Grande has a Catholic, a Protestant, and, I believe, a Wesleyan church; but the Indians, for whom it was originally formed, have long since run off and hidden themselves in the woods. The result of my journey was, a conviction that the negro population in Trinidad is the most independent in its circumstances, perhaps, in the world, blessed with a profusion of every substantial good, limited only by their own apathy and idleness, and an equally strong conviction, that out of Port of Spain, the climate would allow any temperate white labouring-man to work without danger, the "country" being ten degrees cooler than the city.

I slept one night at Mount Steuart, and next day got back to Port of Spain. I had been out eighteen days, and the journey cost me about twenty-one dollars, seven bits, or about four pounds ten shillings and sixpence.

CHAPTER III.

THE CENTIPEDE AND THE ANTS—A NIGHT OF ADVENTURES—GOVERNOR PICTON—OFFICIAL DEFAULTERS—NEGRO JURORS—METHODIST WAKES—CHARTIST OPERATIONS.

AFTER the coolness of the country, I found Port of Spain excessively hot. The first night after my return I accidentally moved my pillow, previous to getting into bed, when out rushed a centipede, at least six inches long. I gave battle, and killed it with the heel of my boot, severing the head from the body; but as the sight of these reptiles is not pleasant, I thrust it out of the room, leaving the boards strewed with the head and sundry feet, fully intending to measure it in the morning; when, however, to my astonishment it had disappeared, body, head and legs. "De ant eat um, Sar," explained my servant. Certes, nothing was left to show that a centipede had ever been there, except the stains of the combat on the floor. Centipedes run very fast when living, but this had vanished after death.

Friday, the 26th of May, was a night of events. Whilst undressing I saw something black move, and discovered that it was one of the enormous black tarantulas of Trinidad, the bite of which invariably produces fever. I tried to hit him, but failed, so quickly did it dart from place to place. Lying down, I heard something move under my pillow, and instantly struck a light, when I found a congoree, or blind worm, having a number of small legs like a caterpillar. It is harmless, but was very disagreeable, and I threw it out of window. No sooner was I down again, than I felt another crawling, and got up and examined all about, but could see nothing; but directly I put out the light, I felt a very distinct movement under my head. As soon as I sprang up, out rushed a large centipede, just in time to receive a stroke with my cutlass, which severed him unequally into two parts. This, I thought, had finished him, but away went the head and larger portion faster than I could give chase, and effected a retreat. The other extremity, two inches long, remained tolerably quiet; but receiving a gentle reminder from the cutlass it began to crawl also. Having put an end to this, I turned up the bed in some trepidation, but only found two congorees lying snugly coiled up. These I quickly despatched, and for the rest of the night was tormented by nothing more vicious than bats, cockroaches and mice. I summed up the casualties as follows:

One tarantula, a fearful bite;
One centipede, an excruciating bite;*
Three congorees, harmless:
A dozen cockroaches, a sharp nip;
Ditto mice, merely disturbers.
Bats, simply nuisances.

Not so bad for a single night in the Tropics. These vermin were driven into the houses by the rains, which had now commenced again. They seek hidden places which are warm and dry: hence the predilection of the centipede for pillows and so forth.

I heard from a respectable source some account of the proceedings of General Sir R. Picton, then a Colonel, whose government of Trinidad in 1777, excited so much obloquy in the island. In his time society was so disorganized, that the most *respectable* inhabitants were little better than pirates; and murders were so common, that no man's life was worth an hour's purchase. The population and habits were Spanish, in the worst sense of the Spanish Main. Much of these horrible abuses Picton, with his honesty of purpose and stern determination, checked, if he could not stop. No sooner was a murder committed, than the murderer fled to the church, and was protected by the priests. Picton broke down the sanctuary, and swore that if the villain were not given up, he

* It is a matter of observation, that where one centipede is found, a second is certain not to be far off. The negroes say: "You see one centipede? him wife come by and bye."

would hang a priest instead: and that no murderer of the community, being all Catholic, should receive the consolations of religion. As might be supposed by anybody conversant with the Roman Catholic faith, this common-sense view of the matter completely put a stop to assassination, but raised the ire of the priesthood, by interfering with one great source of profit to them, as the murderer was made to disburse very freely for the protection afforded him. Utterly corrupt as the community of Port of Spain is at this moment, the horrible villainies of Picton's time cannot now be perpetrated, and these he exposed and denounced in no measured terms. The whole epoch was a struggle between a high-minded, noble gentleman, and a community of unprincipled ruffians, whose career of vice he checked; and as truth was of no account with them, so long as they got rid of so inconvenient a ruler, they trumped up a series of charges, which ended in his recall and trial. One scene, very characteristic of Picton, was described to me. The Governor called the Cabildo, or Council, together, and unbuckling his sword, laid it before him on the table, exclaiming:

"I have called you together, in order to dismiss you, as a set of the greatest villains in the place. I dismiss all but Begourat,* whom I shall retain and

* It is but fair to remark, that subsequently Colonel Picton and Monsieur Begourat became such good friends, that the Colonel left him attorney to his estates, a charge which he administered very honestly.

appoint one of the members of the next Council; for he is the greatest villain among you, and knows all that is going on; and if he neglects to inform me of any *émeute*, I will hang him up forthwith." The consternation created by such an emphatic speech may be imagined. "However," continued the narrator, "Picton was just the man to deal with such a set, but ultimately the rogues were too strong for him."

At present the utmost corruption and rottenness prevails in some of the public courts and offices; but by dint of lying and plausible garbling, the functionaries have the address to impose on those who otherwise must and would interfere. The art of explaining away the most barefaced rogueries is carried to great perfection here.

Roguery is reduced to a regular system, and I am sorry to say practised by almost every public officer in Trinidad. "Official people are not respected here," said a gentleman to me, "because they are not respectable." To this, however, there are at least three exceptions—Captain Allen (the Treasurer), Judge Knox, and the Solicitor-General, Mr. Bowen, to whom must be added Mr. Williams, Assistant Commissary-General, one of the most upright and honourable men in any country. *Au reste*, it certainly is a horrible community to live amongst. Men of most indifferent private character have been selected to fill some of the highest official situations, and receive the title of *Honourable*.

As might be expected with such functionaries, the

laws are very laxly administered. One family, their connections and creatures, all thoroughly unprincipled men, govern everything in Trinidad. With ample incomes to enable them to be honest, they are all overwhelmed with debts which they are too unprincipled to pay. They fill the principal places, and are thus enabled to play into each other's hands; so that a complaint obtains no redress, as any one of them would be enabled to quash any proceedings entered into against the rest. With such bad examples before them, some consideration must be shown for the bad principles of the negroes. It is a pity that the Home government does not take stringent measures to compel their high officers, in the receipt of large salaries, to pay their debts, and by so doing elevate the characters of those who ought to show a good example to the governed.

The absurdity of citing negroes or coloured people as jurors is obvious, and is ludicrously exemplified every session in the law courts of Port of Spain, where jurors rarely agree on the plainest evidence, the coloured jurors, from actual incapacity to comprehend, raising all the difficulties. The clamour also of the coloured tribes for places which they would be incompetent to fill, as well from their worthlessness as from lax moral principles, is unworthy the attention of the Home Colonial government. Unprincipled as are the majority of the whites in office, in Trinidad, the coloured people would be worse.

To sum up, Trinidad wants in its public men inte-

grity and principle, instead of the general corruption which prevails, even so far as to neutralize the intentions of the most philanthropic governor the island ever had. It wants capital,* energy and knowledge, instead of the needy, supine, and ignorant adventurers who form the bulk of the cane-growing community. It wants freedom of action from the absurd interference and mischievous meddlings at home, of men who, whatever their general information or talent, are utterly unacquainted with the local conditions under which each British island of the Antilles does and must labour, owing to its heterogeneous population, and its peculiarities of soil and of climate. The West India islands vary as much one from the other, as does Juan Fernandez in the Pacific from the Ait at Twickenham.

The Trinidad negroes have a custom exceedingly annoying to their neighbours, that of "waking" the dead, after the most approved Irish fashion, only that

* To show the real state of the case, this year 1848 (the worst for planters), Signor Guiseppè, of Valsyn estate, made five hundred and seventy hogsheads of sugar. He paid higher wages than any other planter in the colony, and went to the extra expense of coal, when the rainy weather did not permit the use of "trash or mogass;" yet after paying all expenses, he cleared sixteen thousand dollars, or three thousand two hundred pounds. Monsieur Bayer, whose estate is free from debt, has done as well. "Ah! but," says the general planter, "they had the capital to do so:" of course they had. "They were not in debt at home *as we are*:" of course not. It merely shows, that with a reasonable capital, people can profitably carry on sugar-making, but that they cannot do so without any capital at all.

the noisy blacks are Methodists. The relations of the deceased of both sexes assemble early in the evening—well provided with new rum, and sing hymns and drink rum all the night until "daylight doth appear!" by which time every one is intoxicated, and then the maudlin drunken psalmody is offensively ludicrous to their sober listeners. Such pious orgies ought not to be allowed in towns, as all within hearing suffer from the disturbance; but the municipal regulations of Port of Spain are wretchedly enforced. The noisy tum-tum being prohibited after eight o'clock at night, to evade the regulations they begin at eleven o'clock, and keep drumming all Saturday night until broad daylight on Sunday morning, and that without the slightest interruption from the police, who, being chiefly negroes, are readily bribed by a glass of rum to wink at any illegal proceedings.

In all West India towns, grog-shops and hucksters abound, so that one-third of the negroes are in a constant state of excitement from liquor, and drunken brawls with negroes or sailors are disgracefully common. As much of the revenue is derived from such sources, no means are taken for the prevention of this evil. Every third negress keeps a huckster's shop, selling bad ale and porter, ginger beer, plantains and pine-apples, salt fish, and the various articles retailed in minute quantities to the uncalculating populace; negro costermongers perambulate the streets with trays on their heads, selling fresh fish, eggs, bottles of milk, &c.

The shops of Port of Spain are filled with the inferior or refuse goods of Europe; slop clothing, of the most approved "gents" style; slop boots and shoes, made expressly for exportation, *i. e.*, as rotten as possible; and the frauds practised on the unwary by *respectable* firms, are almost ludicrous. In many cases, as in wine, porter, &c., the imposture is not apparent until the trial is made. Of a truth, the laxity of principle and morality in the West Indies, is something astounding.

Cedar is very fragrant and romantic in poetry! but most disagreeable in nature, particularly at night, when these trees exhale their odours. I was a long time in Trinidad before I could make out the nature of the very pungent, peppery smell that I encountered in certain localities, attributing it to some store in the neighbourhood, which vended pepper, but found at last that it came from the magnificent avenue of cedar-trees in King Street. However, as a set-off to the cedar, we have the kourouky,* or incense-tree, a fine umbrageous denizen of the forest, from between the outer bark of which and the wood itself, there exudes a milky mucilage, which hardens in the air. If this be put on a live coal, we have the incense used in this part of the world in all the Roman Catholic churches.

The first *affiche* that stares a stranger in the face on landing in any West India town is Holloway's Oint-

* An Indian name.

ment and Pills; and it is generally the largest advertisement in every newspaper. "Send us a list of the prevalent disorders of the West Indies," (wrote the London Holloway's people to the agent at Trinidad), "and then we shall know how to word the bills." "Sand's Sarsaparilla," warranted (on oath) to be without mercury, was analysed by Mr. Hunt, at the Laboratory of Yale College, Connecticut, and found to contain a considerable quantity of corrosive sublimate. This fact I can vouch for, as I was present myself during the experiment. So much for the integrity of *quacks*.

In domestic life few things strike a stranger more than the wanton waste of glass, wine and porter bottles in the West Indies, as we in England are accustomed to fix the value of fourpence to each bottle; but here they would seem absolutely valueless, were it not that Jonathan makes old bottles part of his homeward cargo, and as he gets them for next to nothing, a capital thing he makes of it.

The wear and tear of clothing is very great in the West Indies, so that they had need be cheap and common. Washing and thieving quickly destroy and reduce the linen; passing through the woods tears the jacket and trowsers; and cockroaches nibble holes in the woollens, which also absorb moisture to a disagreeable degree. The incessant perspiration in which most people are bathed, quickly destroys all the leathern portions of braces, which in consequence rarely last more than a couple of months. Boots (ready-made, "slop," Eng-

lish and French), are quite rotten, and will never bear re-soling; whilst the workmanship of the few British handicraft tradesmen, as tailors and shoemakers, would not be tolerated in an English provincial town. Most of these operatives in Trinidad, have at home been Chartists, who emigrated to Venezuela, got located in unhealthy situations, and after suffering all sorts of misery from sickness and poverty, found their way over here, and established themselves in their respective crafts. At first, they are disagreeably familiar in manner, rarely choosing to say other than simple "yes," or "no;" the addition of "Sir," being considered a compromise of their right to social equality. However, by degrees, they soften, as they find their dependence to be, not on those of their own rank and sentiments, but on persons accustomed to be approached with respect. Some of these silly people went so far as to abstain from showing the slightest deference to, or acknowledgment of, the position of the Governor, Lord Harris, but at last they got so far as to add "Sir," to the "yes," or "no." I never heard one of them say "My Lord." They are an extremely disagreeable race to deal with, Utopian and unmanageable, and not particularly clever in their trades. The fact is, that in England, these people never had a chance of coming within hail of a gentleman; and when for the first time in their lives they encounter one out here, they are astonished to find that he is infinitely more free and courteous than the aristocratic master tailors and shoemakers heretofore their employers.

During my stay in Trinidad the Portuguese emigrants determined to quit the colony in a body, as they wished to found their own villages, have their own pastors, and live apart from the negro or coloured tribes, with which no Caucasian can associate. Such arrangements could not be allowed in Trinidad. The Americans offered them land for the purpose, and thereby gain a large body of steady and most desirable settlers.

To any reflective mind, a lengthened stay within the Tropics is very wearying. The mindless character and amusements of the inhabitants, white as well as black, in time creates a disgust which even the lovely scenery cannot overcome. To a man surrounded with cultivated spirits, and with sufficient means, a terrestrial paradise might be created, but no such persons are to be found. Still, throughout the globe, the All-wise Creator furnishes equivalents, and in nothing is this more apparent than in a residence in these climates, which we English, smarting as we do with cold, and enveloped in fog and rain, are apt to look upon as gardens of Eden. I will trace a few of these characteristics, which will leave the healthy of England little or nothing to regret. For the invalid, indeed, as far as climate goes, it is quite another matter. Here, we have eternal summer, but it is not a dry summer; and the continued sultriness produces that disagreeable eruption called the "prickly heat," which, however, is not dangerous but rather serviceable, throwing off from the system the redundant heat, yet disagreeable enough to the feelings.

With common care in the selection of localities, I consider the West Indies as healthy as any part of the world; and when people here do suffer from climate, it may be traced to habits or exposure that would produce similar results anywhere.

We in Europe lose nothing in the way of vegetables. Turtle is cheap enough; but the expensive mode of dressing it makes it as rare here as in England, except on grand occasions. Tropical fish, as a general rule, are very inferior to European. The king-fish, lavalli, flying-fish, groper (the best), will not compare with the turbot, the sole, the salmon, smelt, or haddock, of our seas. Prawns, however, are far finer than with us, and skate very good; lobsters are inferior in flavour. Neither beef nor mutton will bear any comparison with ours. Pork is very good; quank and lap superior to any meat that Europeans possess. But on the whole, the equivalents are all in favour of Europe, as is the comparatively decent, orderly, clever labouring population, to the brawling, riotous, and most stupid negro.

CHAPTER IV.

NEGRO SQUABBLES—TRIP TO CEDROS—LOCH MABEN—COLUMBIA ESTATE—MUD VOLCANOES—ST. MARY'S ESTATE—PITCH LAKE—NEGRO SEAMANSHIP—TRINIDADIAN JUSTICE—YOUNG TRINIDAD.

SURELY no fiends can be more clamorous than negroes. The whole place resounds with cries—no time is sacred to quiet—even Sunday is desecrated by the yells and screams of children chastised to a barbarous extreme by their *mothers*. As may be supposed, by such excessive cruelty—a cruelty absolutely inconceivable in Europe—the parental ties are severed at a very early age. The child dreads its mother! Sometimes, when the whole neighbourhood is disturbed, some old negress, having in her a trace of humanity, will come forward and ask: "Are you going to *lick* your child to death?" For my own sake, I was often compelled to interfere, and a stentorian voice, with a sort of Friar Bacon dread in which I was held by the

blacks in the neighbourhood, was generally effective. If but from this cause alone, it is frightful to live amongst a negro population. A physician assured me that he believed many negro children were killed from injuries received through unmerciful beatings. The utter incapacity of negroes to receive unlimited freedom, without having their passions developed to a demoniac point, becomes every day more apparent. To prove the incapacity of even the lemon-coloured tribes, they held a meeting the other day in Port of Spain, to remonstrate on the small number of public offices that were bestowed on the coloured races, asserting their equality in capacity and morality to the whites. This meeting was attended by *two coloured men in office*, who persuaded the remonstrants to strike out of the petition which they had prepared the word "coloured," so of course the whole thing fell to the ground! But what a practical comment on the capacity which they wished to prove! The blacks despise the coloured people, and many negroes refuse to live with them as servants.

Negroes, and the coloured tribes generally, are given to immoderate bursts of laughter, without any sufficiently exciting cause; and by transient travellers through the Antilles this cachinnatory propensity has been most erroneously ascribed to good temper. Most writers on the Tropics have erred on one of these two points: they have either not been long enough in these countries to form a just estimate of the negroes, or so

long a time as to have become reconciled to, and to consider as natural, characteristics which abstractedly are frightful; but all whites who have lived amongst the Africans agree in detesting the negro. To any one accustomed to the sharp sense and intelligence of even inferior Europeans, and their comparatively orderly conduct, the barbarism of the West Indies becomes daily more developed. Coleridge's "Six Months in the West Indies" is absolute nonsense—mere poetry—as ridiculous in its way as Lamartine's "Eastern Travels," and unreality cannot go beyond that.

Laughable as it may seem to uncultivated ears, amongst the minor nuisances of a West India town, are whistling and singing. Negroes are very fond of both these execrable accomplishments—execrable as practised by them; for as they have stentorian organs of noise, and only pick up their tunes by ear, from sources of extremely equivocal authority, the torture of being compelled to listen the live-long day to our popular airs, sang, or whistled, out of all time and tune, and so excruciatingly *in*correct in the air as would cause even St. Cecilia to curse them, is inconceivable. A negro never seems to be happy but when he is yelling and bawling, whistling or singing, and he cannot understand the advantages of quiet. Shrieks of laughter also, or of rage, as the case may be, (from the women), are all very well now and then, but when ringing in one's ears *sans cesse* the whole day, they absolutely become "wearing." From the systematic thieving, swindling, or quarrelling, in some shape common to negroes,

there was a "row" in our street every five minutes throughout the day; and our street was but an epitome of every other street. A congregated negro population come very near to Pandemonium, or rather the inhabitants of one. In North America the negroes have (by comparison with the harsh tones of the Yankees) soft voices, or perhaps the climate there does not permit the full development of their lungs; but in the West Indies the reverse is the case, and negroes of both sexes have voices so harsh, coarse and stunning, that they create unutterable disgust. At the same time, their language is horrible in the extreme.

All the coloured tribes are extremely inquisitive; and as they do not possess a trace of delicacy, their inquisitiveness is carried to absolute impertinence. The only way to check this, is to affront them outright, when they walk off *instanter*. At home we hear a great deal of nonsense talked about these people "knowing no better;" if this is the case, they must be taught better. Horses, dogs, monkeys and parrots are capable of instruction, and why not teach negroes? A negro's idea of freedom is, to be free from all restraint—to do what he likes, careless of the rest of the world; but such an idea of freedom in a ricketty pate is a very dangerous one, and requires wholesome restraint to prevent its dilating into all sorts of atrocity, of which probable contingency Martinique and Santa Cruz afford the most recent examples.

I left Port of Spain on the 2nd of September, in a drogher for Cedros, on an expedition to the mud

volcanoes. Our party consisted of four volatile creole Frenchmen, and myself. The procrastination of West Indians is inconceivable to a European. The period first fixed for our starting was eleven in the forenoon; then half-past four P.M.; we went on board at five o'clock, but did not start until seven, by which time the magnificent breeze, which had blown all day, failed just as we got under weigh. So we came to an anchor two miles from the town, and remained within hearing of the barbarous tum-tums which were beating in every direction until six o'clock on Sunday morning. The breeze was then so light as scarcely to give us steerage way, until, when off La Brea, a rattling squall sent us flying through the water. We arrived at Cedros, sixty miles, by half-past four in the afternoon, and were hospitably received at Beau Séjour estate by the brother of my acquaintance D——. An unexpected irruption of five people creates but little disturbance in a West Indian *ménage*, such are the *sans façon* modes of living. An extra lump of mess-beef will be put in the pot; and two or three hammocks, with a sofa, will stow all parties away for the night. It is, however, no easy matter on an estate to mount six persons on horseback. The manager has his own horse of course, with, perhaps, an old broken-down nag or two in addition. The rest are half-broken mules from the estate's "pen;" and it can hardly be wondered at that, in point of equipment, appearance is sacrificed to convenience. Odd stirrups of unequal lengths, very odd saddles, and still more strange bridles predominate.

Mules are rather *cantankerous* animals, kicking and biting without compunction: besides which, being nearly as short as donkeys, the motion when they gallop is very trying. What with kicking, biting and galloping, they oblige their riders to be very vigilant. On such expeditions, I always carried a small pot of Holloway's ointment, which I found to be really an excellent unguent, having applied it with the best effect to the abraided skin after a mule kick. Doctors being absolutely inaccessible, lint, ointment of some sort, pills, and seidlitz-powders, should form the *vade-mecum* of all prudent travellers in the West Indies; even on the shortest expeditions.

Mounted much as I have described, we set off at nine A.M. for the mud volcanoes of Cedros, breakfasting *en route* at Monsieur Lequin's, Loch Maben estate. Our route lay along the sands, sometimes in the sea, sometimes out of it. We met a most warm reception from Monsieur Lequin. Unfortunately, it is a custom of the French creoles of Trinidad, derived from the Spaniards, to take a mañana (*scottice* a morning), composed of a glass of rum and sugar, slightly diluted with water. This matutinal dose is repeated when on a journey, so that one may set out fully primed and loaded.

At the *maison* of our host, we had a French breakfast, with claret, punch and champagne; but neither tea nor coffee. These libations led to a scene of practical joking and devilry, which only a Frenchman, but no

Englishman, however coarse, could conceive, and from which I, who wanted to see the mud volcanoes, quickly backed out; but it was not until two P.M. that I could get my excited companions under way. However, we did at last arrive at the Columbia estate, belonging to Monsieur Gardier, on whose grounds the volcanoes are situated. The first, which is in a field close to the house, is merely a tumulus of dried mud, about five feet in height, and seven in length, but quite covered up, although on one side on the level ground a little *bocca*, as large as a plug-hole, was in slight ebullition, and showed traces of sulphur. The whole was utterly devoid of interest. Half a mile through some canes and a steep ascent, brought us to the grand volcano a circular area, quite bare of vegetation. It was somewhat smaller than that of Savanna Grande, and about sixty yards in diameter. Instead of separate mounds, too, as at the Devil's Wood Yard, we found a circular plateau of about fifteen feet in height, its top perfectly level, and on this level there were several *boccinas* flush with the surface, and not larger than plug-holes, or the circumference of a quart-pot. The ebullition was very slight. It was evident, however, that we were treading on the dessicated crust of a cauldron or reservoir of liquid mud, as one of the party literally "put his foot in it" by breaking through. These mud vents are continually closing and opening in some fresh place within the plateau. As at Savanna Grande, a hedge of low bushes, perfectly distinct in character from the adjacent sylvia, encircled the whole. How far we were from the sea I could not judge, in

consequence of the surrounding dense foliage, and all the maps of Trinidad are extremely incorrect. Altogether the mud volcanoes of Cedros are inferior to those of Savanna Grande. To the mere sight-seer, there is little to interest in any of them; although to the geologist the mud formation, with its inferences, has some claim to consideration. The whole surrounding country is an undulating plain.

We took a short road to St. Mary's estate, of which Mr. Wylie is the manager. Here we dined, each *habitué* of the house taking a newspaper, or a double sheet of stout foolscap to place on the seat of his cane-bottom chair, while at table, as a preservative from mosquitoes. I had been told of such things, but had treated the matter as a joke, and now saw it realized. In spite of our precautions, we could hardly sit still, although the negro attendants were all dinner-time busily employed in towelling the invaders under, as well as above the table; and numbers of the slain blackened the table-cloth. This was the first time that I had been *really* annoyed by mosquitoes in the West Indies.

This part of the island has no mountains, but is beautifully undulating, so that the scenery is constantly diversified. The country abounds with cabbage-palms and another variety of that tribe, the palma-reale, used as thatch; but the lovely, park-like situations are disfigured by sugar factories as unsightly as the cotton factories of Leeds or Manchester, pouring out, like them, volumes of black

smoke, whilst the long rows of white negro huts are unromantically common-place. To this must be added the squalor of the negroes themselves, being mere bundles of rags—not by any means from poverty, but from economy, as negroes, though ludicrously smart in *grande tenue*, consider anything good enough for field or other labour. Many of the coolies, also, are by choice all but naked, having only the *dhooty*, or waist-cloth round their loins; and they are generally covered with ulcers or sores from jiggars. These, with the stark-naked children of both sexes, form pictures which require a long time to reconcile with one's ideas of decency.

We left Cedros, after a sojourn of three days, for La Brea, in a boat, and were seventeen hours going twenty miles, landing on La Brea beach at half-past three in the morning of the 7th September: not a very agreeable time to get to a strange place. However, being in company with Mr. S. W——, the stipendiary magistrate, I got shelter in the police-station until daybreak. The next day we had violent rain all the forenoon, so stayed quietly in the house.

I saw the Pitch Lake now in a different aspect than when I saw it before, on visiting it from the opposite quarter. Being the rainy season, the Chaudière, or part where the pitch is soft, was quite inaccessible. Some of the pools were five or six feet deep, and the water was quite limpid, and fit for bathing in. It is perfectly tasteless, but when drank for several successive days, has a powerful aperient effect. Although the

little village of La Brea, on the sea-shore, is built on the pitch formation, the lake proper, or open space, is two miles from the beach, above which it is elevated about eighty feet. The pitch works are abandoned. I have no doubt that a course of pitch-lake-water, properly controlled by a medical man, would be a very valuable alterative.

I left La Brea for Port of Spain in a flat or shallow boat, containing four puncheons of molasses to be delivered *en route*, at San Fernando, and passed thirty-seven hours in the open boat, chiefly through the laziness and bad seamanship of the two negroes in charge. Fortunately, I took on board two small two-penny loaves and two bottles of pale ale. After anchoring all night, we got alongside the brig, in the San Fernando roads, fifteen miles from La Brea, in twenty-five and a half hours. The Captain, a civil Scotsman, kindly invited me on board, and gave me an excellent meal, of which I was very much in want. After sundry adventures from the laziness and stupidity of my crew, I reached Port of Spain at four o'clock the next morning (Sunday).

The moon had sunk behind the mountains of Venezuela, and the light of the lighthouse was all but out, being managed, like everything else in Trinidad, by incompetent persons. Indeed, so universal is the corruption amongst the public servants, that to receive their salaries, to defraud where they can, and to do their duties as carelessly as possible, seem to be the general aim. In consequence of the state of the port-

light, we could scarcely make our way amongst the shipping, and only after great hazard attained the wharf.

Our negroes knew nothing the whole passage, of the tides or currents, whether they were for or against us. Near San Fernando are extensive flats, and as we drew three feet of water, I inquired if we could go over them?

"Yes, Sar, ober eberyting."

"Can you shave the point?" (Point Couvre.)

"Yes, Sar, we shabe the points—eberything."

Finding our steersman dead asleep, yawing in a very disagreeable manner to a man anxious to get home, I offered to take the helm, which offer being accepted, with a light wind and a certainty that we could "go over everything," I went merrily on; my two captains coiling themselves up to sleep. Scarcely a quarter of an hour had elapsed, as we ran along a full quarter of a mile from the shore, when I heard a very strange sound, a dashing about of the water close to the boat as if a shark or a barracuda were chasing the fishes, or as if a man were swimming lustily, and two minutes afterwards we were aground, hard and fast.

The odd noise I had heard was the surf breaking on the sand; and we had the greatest difficulty in getting afloat again. I then said to the negroes: "Why you told me you could go over everything."

"Yes, Sar, yes; but dis him shallow—shallow, here."

As we continued our voyage, I asked: "Why do you keep so far from the shore?"

"Cause ob de flat," was the reply.

"You told me that your boat could go over everything."

"Yes, Sar, so her can; but here dere *not water enough.*"

In nothing is the malignancy and malevolence of the negro character more apparent than in their treatment of the coolies, or the Portuguese, whenever they get a chance. These poor strangers, far from their native homes, and from all who speak their language, suffer the most abominable ill-usage. The coolies are lured here from India by promises which it is well-known can never be fulfilled. Such of these poor wretches, as, after being swindled in the country places, settle in the towns; follow the occupation of porters, cattle-drivers and milk-sellers; and when cajoled into working for the negroes, are, as a thing of course, defrauded of their small gains, and grossly insulted into the bargain. Dire are the squabbles in consequence, even to the murder of the unfortunate aliens; and for this purpose, a premium is virtually held out from the determination of Justice ——, *never* to convict a negro for a capital crime. The following case, reported in the "Port of Spain Gazette" of September 19th, 1848, is in point: "A negro urchin of ten years of age, himself the aggressor, grossly and unprovokedly insulted a coolie (I have

witnessed a dozen such cases), when the coolie ran after and struck him, but not severely. The boy vowed revenge, in which he was encouraged by his mother; and, watching an opportunity, he threw a stone, produced in court, and weighing nearly two pounds, at the coolie, striking him on the temple. The coolie ran a short distance, then laid down on the ground, and shortly afterwards expired. The fact could not be denied, and the surgeon said that nothing but the blow had killed him; but the evidence of the *same* medical man when examined in court, being then, however, in league with the Judge, was so infamously unjust, that, although the fracture of the skull was admitted, he said, that in consequence of the diseased state of the coolie's system, a sneeze might have caused his death; so, under the Chief Justice's summing up, a verdict of "Not Guilty" was pronounced, and the murderer was set at large, literally *Scot* free.

Returning home one afternoon, I saw a crowd, and heard a low moaning, but as quarrels are so common here, I took no notice of it until I noticed that the ejaculations were in a foreign tongue: "*Oh Dio mio, mio Dio!*" &c.; and I then saw a respectably dressed Portuguese with the blood streaming from his face, which appeared to be fearfully cut. He was lying down in the road, but I advised him to go to the police office, as none of the by-standers would seek a policeman; and it was necessary that I should remain, in order to prevent the escape of the negro delinquent, who had presented himself in the yard, snapping his

fingers, apparently in bravado; but a gang of policemen rus' ing down upon him, he made off. The curious part of the affair was, that, although the sympathies of the negresses were so far excited that they exclaimed: "De poor buckra; he badly used; he cut by dat willain, who cut many more people besides;" not one of them would fetch a policeman, perhaps fearing the vengeance of the miscreant when he should be released. In truth, there is no atrocity of which a negro is not capable; and no favouritism which some of the partial administrators of the law in Trinidad do not extend to him.

Trinidad is not subject to hurricanes, although they seem to be generated in the Gulf of Paria, by the heated air of the plains of the Oronoco meeting the cooler sea. They commence with heavy squalls about Cedros or La Brea, whence, gathering strength, they rush on, and spend themselves in frightful violence about Antigua, St. Kitts, and the other northern islands, giving St. Vincent a taste of their quality *en route*. This I know for certain, that in Trinidad we never had a blow from the southward, that we were not sure to hear of fearful disasters further north; whilst a tree or two blown down, or a badly-built bridge carried away by the rain, was the extent of the damage in our own locality.

Amongst the anomalous materials which compose the population of Trinidad, not the least absurd is that of "Young Trinidad;" a body of raw juveniles, who set themselves up as regenerators, their only

qualification being youth, and extreme ignorance. "Young Trinidad" consists of lads of French creole parentage, and, although British subjects, as their fathers were before them, are sent to France for education! speaking French *en famille*, and bringing from thence, into the heart of a British colony, French ideas of government, of morality (or rather of *im*-morality), and of manners. These asses of third-rate Frenchmen, wearing beards and other characteristics of the French democrats, prate even here the despicable cant of "liberty, equality and fraternity;" and consider themselves aggrieved, because a British island which gives these *crapeau* British creoles protection, and a maintenance, is not governed according to French laws and principles! They maintain constant intercourse with Martinique; and, as a consequence, feelings inimical to the British government are engendered, and inflamed throughout Trinidad. Their morality is very loose; and high principle is all but unknown to them, and being adepts in every kind of chicanery, they are never to be trusted. Yet, like the coloured people, they are furious that the government will not advance them to posts of importance.

To give an idea of the *animus* which the coloured people endeavour to instil into the negroes, "The Trinidadian," a very low paper, the organ of the negroes, edited by a coloured man, in a "Notice to Correspondents" of October 14th, 1848, remarks on some withdrawn article, "We beg to inform our grievous-hearted, but fiery young friend (one of

'Young Trinadad,') that he, or any one may 'presume to write for our paper,' as we have ere this been honoured with communications from Sambo* himself—the *veritable and rightful Lord of Trinidad and its dependencies.*"

One Jules Garcin, the son of a low mattress-maker, who had accumulated a considerable sum in Port of Spain, went to France and England, and passed himself off as the Prince of Chicachicare, one of the little islands of the Boccas. In a very short time, this poor wretch spent all the hard-earned dollars of his miserly father, and slunk back to Port of Spain a beggar, where he now remains in his pristine obscurity, existing on the recollections of his one year of greatness! He had the unparalleled impudence to offer to carry back the Duke of Brunswick, then under a cloud, as his private secretary!

Another French creole of the same town, one D'A——, a planter, went to France as the Marquis of Santa Cruz, a little valley a few miles from Port of Spain; and a coloured Trinidadian, Antoine R——, of equally low caste, and whose father was also a mattress-maker, passed in England as the Ambassador of Hayti. These well-authenticated instances will give an imperfect notion of the vanity and absurd pretensions of Trinidad creoles.

Mr. Mc D——, conducting the business of one of the principal firms in Port of Spain, informed me,

* "Sambo," a generic term for negroes.

that in 1847 he lost, through robbery in his store, by his creole assistants, £350 sterling, and in 1848 no less than £400! Young lads, mere boys, keep mulatto mistresses, who continually instigate them to commit robberies of shawls, dresses, shoes, gloves, &c., as well as to maintain them in all sorts of extravagance, whilst they themselves smoke cigars, drink like fishes, and but too often gamble. A physician assured Mr. Mc D——, that on being called into one of these women, kept by a creole lad, he found all sorts of goods thus obtained, rolls of silk, cloth, &c., strewn carelessly about the wretched apartment. When found out in their delinquencies, the offenders are simply dismissed, to play a similar game in the next situation they may obtain. Mr. Mc D—— added that all his British boys were absolutely above suspicion, yet among the natives embezzlement of money is so common as to be considered a matter of course, the delinquents scarcely losing caste.

I was a witness of one of those disgraceful mixtures of superstition, revelry and profanity, a "wake," which took place in our yard about the end of September, in consequence of the death of a negro, who, *in extremis*, was kicked out of doors by his dingy mistress, and brought here expressly to die, which the poor wretch did in two days. As the poor white landlady of our house, being a defenceless widow, could with impunity be bullied and insulted by the negroes, her permission to admit the sick man, or to allow a wake to be held over him, was not even asked.

His relations were Methodists of the lowest class, his cousin being my washwoman. The row began at seven P.M., by a variety of psalms being sung; at nine o'clock, by which time the yard was crammed with women of a *very* doubtful character, girls, drunken sailors, and ruffians of every degree, and whilst the pious were singing hymns, the other vagabonds formed in circles, dancing round, clapping their hands, and singing in most profane chorus, considering the occasion of these furious orgies. The uproar was so fearful, that I was at length obliged, after asking permission of the landlady, to send for the police; but seven or eight men against a hundred sturdy negroes all armed with sticks, and ripe for any mischief, could do nothing to quell the riot. The revellers, therefore, had it all their own way. Wakes are common to negroes of all denominations.

CHAPTER V.

SECOND VISIT TO CEDROS—LOS GALLOS—POINT GALPHA—MAROON TO POINT HICACOS—INTEMPERANCE OF THE POPULATION—COOLIE NEPOTISM—NEGRO MARRIAGES—BRITISH NEGLECT OF COMMERCE—NEGRO POLICE—NEGRO VENGEANCE—MORTALITY—DEMORALIZATION OF SOCIETY.

At the beginning of October, I paid another visit to Cedros. Our captain, a negro, declared that he was all ready to sail at noon; but we did not trip our anchor till half-past eight in the evening. We landed at St. Mary's estate at half-past nine next morning.

During the night an incendiary fire had occurred on Perseverance estate, and three and a half quarrees of canes (eleven acres) were burnt. This was in consequence of the monstrous wages having been reduced. It is of no use to reason with the negro, and tell him that sugar is so low in the market that the estate must be abandoned if the wages be not lowered, &c. He will not understand—"Me no know, massa,—me no work for less." The fault committed by the planter is that the negro has his house and provision-grounds free,

so that he can afford to be idle. Were he made to pay a heavy rent, equal to a day's wages, for every day that he would not work, the evil would soon be corrected.

En route, one of our black crew enlightened me as to negro policy. "I tink I go on estate agin. (When tired of field labour, they will go to sea for a few months, and so change about.) "Wages only tree bits; but if de estate near town, so de provisions can be carried, a man can make *double dat;* he work well on de ground, can clear sometimes tirty dollars a month; but *dem not like de massa know dat.* Dem say, oh, no, massa, de times berry bad." And it is literally the fact, that the labourer often does clear thirty dollars (six guincas) a month in hard cash, by the produce of his provision-ground.

Negroes generally hide their money: they extort it from the whites by the most unconscionable charges, and shell it out as if it were their hearts'-blood. To this every shopkeeper in Port of Spain can testify. They will not on an average make a purchase more than once in six times that they enter a shop; but will overhaul, cheapen (steal, if possible), and then go away, to play the same game elsewhere. Such avarice I never before saw in any human beings.

Proceeding from St. Mary's to Loch Maben, I passed through the burnt canes. The labourers from the neighbouring estates had been summoned by alarm bells; but the majority looked on with folded arms, and sullen looks, and would not render any assistance.

The canes, however, were not quite lost, and would yet yield capital rum. I arrived at Loch Maben by four o'clock P.M., thoroughly tired.

Next morning I visited the mud volcanoes, about two miles from Loch Maben. The level of the volcanoes is in itself a high one, as we made an ascent from the road, through the canes, of sixty or seventy feet. The first volcano (for there are two quite close together) is an old one, looking very like the *débris* of a deserted cinder yard. It is overgrown with straggling half-decayed trees and bushes. The other, which is the principal, is about ten yards distant, and is quite bare of vegetation. The top of the double plateau is not more than fifteen feet above the level, not of the valley, but of the top of the hill on which they are situated. The earth has a strong sulphureous smell, but I could not detect any well-defined deposits or crystals of sulphur. The highest plateau on which the boccas or vents are situated, is covered with deep cracks; everything indeed indicating extreme desiccation, save the mere lid of the cauldron itself. I measured the principal bocca, and found it barely seven inches in diameter. A stick of ten feet in length was however thrust in without any indication of soundings. Occasionally a bubble would burst up, with a slight pop, yet loud enough to scare my negro guide and attendant. "I no like for true massa go too near: him werry tin" (thin). And such in truth I believe to be the case. There must be a lake of liquid mud, not very far beneath these vents, and which doubtless extends under a very

large portion of the island, and is connected probably with the vents of Savanna Grande, of Erin, of the Lagoon Bouffe, and of others yet undiscovered. Now, taking all this in connection with the Pitch Lake, is it improbable that some time or other all this part of the island may subside, and be no more seen? One thing is certain, the foundation is a very ticklish one. To me the most curious part of the Cedros volcano was, that I found several nodules of well-defined pyrites embedded in the dried mud; but whether of zinc or of iron, I had no tests to ascertain. My negro guide believed them to be gold, because the governor, when on a visit to the mud vents, had directed the poor fellow to gather as many as he could and send them to Port of Spain, when he would be paid for his trouble. The negro guide informed me that the vents were about two miles from the sea. I brought away several of the pyritous nodules.

I accompanied M. Lequin and M. Espinet on a mare's-nest expedition to see the caves of Los Gallos, about two miles distant. We got down to the sea-beach at low water, spring tide; and a pretty journey we had of it. Our course lay, for the most part, in the break of the sea at the base of a range of friable sandstone rocks, hollowed at intervals into shallow caves, literally not worth the trouble of a glance. At each rocky point which jutted out, we had to scramble in the sea over and between huge boulders of rock, the sea breaking against the main range, and, in its rebound, sending showers of spray over us. The

spaces between the boulders were deep holes, into which our horses plunged and floundered about to our manifest danger, to say nothing of the minor annoyance of often being up to our knees in water and well drenched by showers of spray. My mule, being lower than the horses, I got a larger share of what was passing, and was completely soaked through. The struggling, plunging, and drenching lasted about three-quarters of an hour, when, on approaching Los Gallos, M. Lequin's horse slipped off a rounded rock into a deep hole and threw his rider into the water, apparently falling on him. I was alarmed in the highest degree for the consequences, but fortunately M. Lequin escaped with a sound ducking. This accident cooled the ardour of the two Frenchmen, and it was resolved in council not to prosecute the expedition any further. The entire range of rocks, including a huge rock in the distance, called the Soldier's Rock, from the dangerous passage of Hicacos, the dread of mariners. The seven principal rocks are covered with vegetation, and, in three instances, with trees: of course, they were once connected with the mainland of Trinidad. The long mountainous ridge of the Spanish main is visible from hence; also the boccas and the mountains of Trinidad.

The next day I visited Point Galpha, the Souffrière of Trinidad. It is about five miles from Loch Maben, but few people even in Trinidad are aware of its existence. Numerous specimens of pyrites, that I had seen brought from thence, stimulated my curiosity to

examine, *in situ*, a locality described in an imperfect and contradictory manner by people whose information is generally limited to sugar-making.

I passed through the Columbia estate, occupied by M. Gardier, and struck into a narrow green lane to the left. Here, were it not for a pit-muck now and then, a wild cane, coarse rush-like Guinea grass, acacia and wild liquorice, I might have imagined myself in one of the unique rural avenues of England. A mile and a half through the lane brought us out upon the southern sea coast, opposite the caños of the Oronoco, which, even to its trees, we could distinctly see. In fact, from Point Hicacos, this part of the delta of the Oronoco is only two hours and a half's sail, or between seven and eight miles.

Point Galpha is at least a mile and a half east of the spot where we struck the beach. It is necessary to be there at dead low water, as, when the sea is up, the place is impassable. The Point is a bank of about thirty feet in height, covered with pit-muck and other coarse varieties of a tropical sylvia. The base is strewn with rounded stones, apparently the *débris* of rocks, whilst the strong sulphuric-bituminous smell with the black colour of the soft soil, convinced us at once that this was merely the crop-out of the pitch formation, connected, no doubt, with that vast formation of pitch and mud which constitutes nearly one-fifth of Trinidad. Here, at the very bottom of the soft bank, we found the pyritous nodules scattered in great profusion. They had evidently been washed out

of the pitch down the bank, and lay exposed on the surface of the soil, being readily detected by the glittering crystals of pyrites of some sort, but of what metal we had not at the moment any means of ascertaining. I found afterwards, however, that they were pyrites of iron. So numerous were they, that in half an hour we might have filled a moderate sized basket with them. I collected as many as I could conveniently carry away, for they were exceedingly heavy; but M. Lequin found one of the most perfect metallic crystals it was ever my good fortune to see, and which he kindly presented to me. It was a cube of solid metal, an inch square, each plane having a cluster of irregular crystals in its centre. Its regularity was something astounding, and it weighed exactly four ounces.

I had heard rumours of a sub-marine volcano, half a mile from the shore, the ebullitions of which had often been seen; but, on inquiry of M. Roseau, an old inhabitant of the nearest estate, I found that there was no truth in the rumour. In 1794, however, the whole site of Point Galpha itself had been seen in a blaze by a traveller along the coast: "And since then," said M. Roseau, "the sea has, to my knowledge, encroached four hundred paces on the land; as, at one time, I could not from Point Galpha see Point Erin, at present perfectly visible, with several intermediate points, twenty miles to the eastward.

Altogether, Point Galpha is a most interesting spot, well worthy of a more minute inspection, with greater

scientific knowledge than we could bring to bear upon it. The best plan would be, to arrive just at half ebb-tide, to pic-nic on the bank itself when the tide returns, and then descend once more to satiate one's curiosity.

On M. Roseau's estate are several volcanic boccas of mingled mud, pitch and sulphur, but they are scarcely worth a visit.

I went on a maroon jaunt to Point Hicacos, about five miles from Loch Maben; the greater part of the road lying along the sea-shore. A cart with two mules *tandem*, conveyed Miss Susan, our housekeeper. Point Hicacos is a low point of land, five miles round; but all the maps of Trinidad are so wretchedly incorrect as to give but little notion of the island; the last, by Basanta, being the worst. Cocoa-palms form the staple commodity, as the soil is purely arenaceous. We arrived at M. Alex. Lequin's, and found his housekeeper, a handsome coloured Spanish girl, in a hammock, ill of the fever. Creoles of this country seem to suffer much more from fever than strangers; a circumstance which is explained by their miserable style of living. The houses, or rather huts, are raised on posts two feet from the sand, into which underneath spare dogs bring their bones, whilst cats, fowls, ducks, &c., take up their quarters there, amidst decayed vegetable matter and other garbage which finds its way down through the interstices of a flooring, not of plank, but of small trees or bamboos split in half, and merely laid loosely down without being nailed. Behind the house

is a lagoon, or rather swamp, in which decayed vegetation struggles for ascendancy with the shallow water. Speak to a creole of all this as a cause of sickness, and he laughs at you. Their ignorance of all that other people know is most extraordinary.

At half-past two P.M., the tide (a spring), was more than half up; so I left my mule and took a seat in the cart. Our negro was the best driver on the estate, and certainly he had need to be so. One-third of our route lay through the sea, and we were continually receiving an admonition to "tand up, or you be wet, I tell you." Glad was I when our drive was over, and we were once more at home.

Amongst the better classes here, such as priests and doctors, intemperance in drink is the prevailing vice. They, like the planters, have much unoccupied time on their hands, and so they "take to drinking." Three doctors died at Cedros, during my stay, from hard drinking; and the fourth was following in their footsteps, whilst the Abbé K—— sips the fiery potion like a syphon. At Loch Maben, although there was no intemperance, no one but myself drank water without a mixture of strong white rum. I substituted claret, or shrub; for drink something one must, and that very often too, in the course of the day.

Every night there was a dance amongst the negroes on the estate, to the banishment of all peace and quiet. The horrible drumming began about seven o'clock in the evening, and, with the chorus, was kept up until daybreak next morning. This was all very well as far as

the negroes are concerned, but far from well for the poor planter, as the blacks were exhausted and unfit for work the next day. They, however, need not care, as their food is so easily obtained, and their houses involve neither rent nor taxes. Play is all they want, and as little work as possible is done, and that in as slovenly a manner as can well be. The recent events in Europe have done much to unsettle the negroes; they laugh — they dance — and sing: "De poor buckra! dey soon be obliged to gib up dere estate, den all de land come to de blacks." This is what they *do* say now. The doctrines of Communism, Socialism, and all the worst French delusions are spreading amongst them to a dangerous degree, and they will, ere long, be ripe for any movement. The further one goes from the seat of government, the more insolent, lawless, and unruly do the negroes on the estates become, knowing the difficulties that the planter would incur in endeavouring to bring them to justice.

Negro domestics will never sleep in the house if it can be avoided, as in such case the restraints on them would be too great to answer their purpose. Their absence at night sometimes leads to serious annoyances; as if a fire or accident of any sort occurs, no assistance is at hand. His Excellency Lord Harris assured me, that sitting up one evening to read, after his company had left him, he found that the whole body of negro servants had left the house, even to his valet. The white housekeeper was asleep in a remote

part of the building; so there was nothing left for it, but for him, the Governor, to put out all the lights, and bolt the doors; in fact, to shut up the house and go to bed unattended. Out of the West Indies, or amongst whites, such a necessity in a person of equal rank could never have occurred, and even in this case seems ludicrous.

It is the object of the coloured people, and of their organ, the "Trinidadian," to make it appear to those at home, that "the badge of a coloured skin" alone causes their proscription; but such is not the case. With the colour, they inherit, more or less, the horrible tempers, the malignancy, the treachery and utter want of principle of their negro progenitors. This, of course, in their plea for themselves, is utterly suppressed; but no one having a knowledge of how they act, can scan the contracted beetle-brows of the mulattoes, the thoroughly bad expression of most of their faces, without seeing that the spirit of the negro race lurks within them and indeed is scarcely latent, since it constantly develops itself as circumstances arise.

To a non-resident, night in a West Indian town is wretchedly dull. Books can rarely be obtained, theatres do not exist, and an occasional ball at the Governor's, or an execrable concert now and then, at the same charge as a first-rate one in London or Paris, are the only breaks in the endless monotony. The people generally are not sociable, and to go to bed at

eight or nine o'clock is one's only resource. The dark unlighted town gives one the horrors as one stumbles through the streets; and, when in bed, one becomes a prey for all sorts of insects. Another nuisance is the barbarous music of that dark season. The guitar, flute or violin, played by coloured people and negroes, salute the ear in excruciating strains; whilst in the principal street of Port of Spain (Frederick Street), almost every house resounds with musical efforts. One coloured young lady in my neighbourhood used to fill half the street with her stentorian lungs. Nearly opposite, two young "gents" indulged in fierce blasts on the *cornet-à-piston*, or some equally diabolical instrument. Two doors beyond resided a crazy flute, filling up the measure of my torments.

From want of public amusements or any means of improving or relaxing the mind, young tradesmen take to drinking and gambling. Marriage is with British Europeans very costly, as European women get into bad health, and must go home to Europe every three or four years for a twelvemonth's recruit. Then the husband forms dangerous coloured connections; and there are few young Englishmen who are not hampered with one or more half-caste children, a discredit to them here and a burthen to them in after-life.

I am compelled to admit that the coolies here are a failure. The climate does not agree with them and they prefer idling about the city, picking up a precarious subsistence, and even to camp out in the ditches of the

suburbs and feed on carrion, to steady labour on the estates. In the town they are great nuisances, as, if a person hire one, the coolie will bring his whole family and endeavour to foist them on his employer. Of this, the following occurrence is a case in point:— Having left my "negro yard" for another lodging where horses were kept, a coolie man was engaged to attend to them. An hour afterwards he returned, followed by a woman bearing in her arms a squalling infant and also by a second man, and without further apology than: "Dis my wife, my shilds, my brudder," he coolly installed them in the yard, taking possession of the porch at the bottom of the stairs, where they instantly spread out their mats, their brass pots and cooking traps! Sleeping rooms in the West Indies are, as much as possible, exposed to the air, and mine was in a gallery so constructed, from the jalousies, as to be completely overlooked from the yard. Here, in addition to the squalling of the infant and the harsh gutteral conversation of this Hindoo family, we had the whole *posse* lounging about, watching our every movement, or examining each other's heads with the minuteness of monkeys. As we made no remonstrance for the first day, which happened to be Sunday, the next morning a second woman with her child was introduced. This, however, proved to be too much; and the man was summarily paid off and the whole tribe ejected, though not without great difficulty.

There are some very ridiculous as well as reprehensible customs here on the marriage of negroes. Any

white gentleman's African groom invited to the marriage, is allowed the privilege of using his master's horses and carriage for the bridal party; so that six or eight carriages are thus obtained, and the merest ragamuffin porter or boatman on the wharf, will, on these occasions, enjoy this state. Church-bells are rung, and contingent expenses are incurred which load the poor vain bridegroom with debts for the rest of his life, besides filling his woolly-head with the ridiculous idea that he is a gentleman! All this sort of thing gives rise to much insolence on the part of the negroes towards their employers, and therefore is alike injurious to themselves, and dangerous to others. On one occasion I saw at a negro marriage eighteen gentlemen's carriages. It is not unusual for negroes to spend a hundred dollars (twenty guineas) on the funeral of a poor wretch who went in rags all his life. In these cases, the money is paid down before hand, as the negro undertaker knows better than to give credit even for a day.

With the exception of groceries, bad wine and wretched brandy (coloured whisky), brought out from Great Britain, usually from Glasgow, Trinidad is entirely dependent for her supplies upon the Spanish Main, and the United States. Oxen, mules, plantains, yams, &c., come from the adjacent coast of Venezuela. The duty on oxen is only five shillings; on horses thirty shillings; on mules, sheep, vegetables, there is no duty. Mess-beef, porter, salt fish, butter, flour and pigeon peas, with all northern vegetables, such as cabbages, turnips,

beet, &c., are brought from America; potatoes and onions from Bermuda. Trinidad itself could raise most of these were it not for the apathy and supineness of its negro cultivators, with the certainty that any provision-grounds cultivated by a white person would be remorselessly plundered, of course with the connivance of any watchman placed to guard them. Such, indeed, is the state of morality amongst the blacks, that they rob each others grounds by wholesale. Owing to the criminal folly of the British, the Americans virtually hold all the carrying trade in their hands, and bring all sorts of things for sale, taking nothing back but dollars; sugar, molasses or rum, the staples of the island, they do not want, as their own Southern (slave) States, or Cuba, supply them more cheaply. To make our policy still more fatal, the imperial duty is taken off all foreign commodities brought to the West Indies, though introduced to the exclusion of British goods, causing a constant drain of specie to America.

The average passage of thirty days from Great Britain to Trinidad, is but a very few days more than from the United States, and, indeed, I was myself thirty-one days from Baltimore to Barbadoes. Why, then, should not the now half-laden British ships bring out the same sort of provisions as the Americans? Cheese, at the lowest, is invariably a quarter of a dollar (one shilling and a half-penny) a pound;—surely that would pay. Potatoes find an eager sale at a highly remunerative price; and Ireland could furnish them

as cheaply as Bermuda. British mess-beef and pork is better cured than that of America; can it not be furnished as cheaply? At any rate, a ship filled up in such a way would pay better than the half cargoes which at present come out. But nothing seems to be thought of but groceries and dry goods; rubbish for women which are quite a drug in the market, and some of which can be purchased cheaper here than in London, the colonial duty not equalling the higher rent and taxes of the Metropolis. In truth, from some cause or other, everything seems to be done to encourage foreign produce of every sort, and to *dis*courage all that is British—a policy I cannot understand.

The negro mode of washing is very provoking to one's nerves. I had to put on a night-shirt as stiff as a deal-board; they actually starch one's towels! and, *horribile dictu!* one's cambric pocket-handkerchiefs. They even starched my real *lazzaroni* drawers. My collars were constantly all jagged, my wristbands in a fringe, and my shirt-buttons all off.

Creole impudence is something amazing. One good man, who absurdly and in vain applied for my interference, had written to the government for a place; but, as no answer was returned, he requested me to introduce the subject to His Excellency, the Governor. "As," said he, "I really have a claim, having already been a government officer, but I resigned; and I consider it very ill-breeding—nay, shameful conduct in them, not to answer my letter." The truth was, he had, when a government officer,

embezzled the public money, and they did not turn him out in order to spare the feelings of his father, a wealthy and respectable man, but most mercifully allowed him to resign. Yet he was furious that his application for another appointment remained unnoticed. This man was one of the many here, who

> "Con arte e con inganno
> Vivano il mezz' anno,
> Con inganno, e con arte
> Vivano, l' altro parte."

The same person borrowed of me a small sum of money, solemnly pledging himself, by word of honour, to repay it on a stated day; but, as I anticipated, and hoped at the time, I have never seen him since. The majority of official people, though with large salaries, are steeped in debt, which they never appropriate one farthing of their income to liquidate; until at last, "official man" and "swindler" have become synonymous terms! "When I hear that any new customer is an official man," said a shop-keeper to me, "I am very shy of him." Justice, in such cases, is of course out of the question, as all people in office hang together. Judgment in court may be procured against them, but the enforcement is always evaded. Laws or regulations made at home should include the colonies, a common boast here being, whilst speaking of any home regulations that would touch them nearly: "Ah! but they dare not do

so at home." But why do they dare in the colonies? The sooner such things are remedied the better.

The hatred which the black and coloured people bear to the whites is evinced here daily. Venial acts, which, in the case of a black man, would be entirely overlooked, are, if a white be the aggressor, pounced upon with the greatest eagerness. The pleasure of hauling a white man through the streets to the police office, is a temptation too great for a black to resist; whilst the most flagrant abuses are unnoticed by the negro policemen when their own colour is concerned. A most respectable white merchant, of Spanish extraction, Signor Garcia, was informed that a cow of his had been impounded, the fine for which was seven and a half bits (three shillings and three halfpence), and he went immediately and tendered a dollar in payment; but because he had not the exact sum of three shillings and three halfpence, the police refused to receive the dollar, or to give him change, and he was hurried through the streets to the police office, surrounded by all the rabble of the town. Of course he was quickly released; but I saw the mob, and I cannot describe their exultation at his humiliation. A week previously, a most respectable captain of a ship, trading to the West Indies, whilst on the wharf, gave one of his apprentices a well-deserved tap on the head for disobedience of orders, when he was immediately seized by a black policeman, and conveyed to the police office; though being rather a famous pugilist, he could, had he so chosen, have floored twenty negroes in succes-

sion. He refrained, however; though his two sturdy apprentices, feeling themselves in fault, were so indignant at the insult offered to their master, that they were with difficulty restrained from freeing the captain by force. It may be asked why the proper authorities tolerate these things? The answer is that they are so overwhelmed with debt, as to have lost all independence of action. They dare not be impartial. It is quite impossible, I believe, to convey to the English reader an adequate idea of the incessant swindling going on among the black and coloured tribes. The streets absolutely resound with the yells and imprecations of the swindler and the cheated. A gentleman, who knows the colony well, remarked to me, "Sir, it always was so, more or less; but now it is ten times worse than ever." This is quite true: so universal is the demoralization that prevails, that it almost makes Americans appear honest.

There is one curious result of this vile state of general society in Trinidad, that the few people of common honesty, such as do not cheat those with whom they have dealings, assume an importance and superiority over all others, that is extremely ludicrous. People who, in England, would be rather less than nothing, and at best only belonging to the *sine nominis turba*, become exclusive here; and from this feeling, often offensively shown, springs the cold and inhospitable reception given to strangers.

On Christmas-eve, 1848, a man was stabbed dead

by Spaniards. But this occasioned me no surprise, remembering the premium given to murder by the immunity which murderers derive from justice here. At that very moment, one Candido Gutieres, a Spanish negro, was under sentence of death for an atrocious murder, but had not been convicted until every possible expedient had been resorted to in order to get him off. It was even contrived that ten out of the twelve jurymen should be black or coloured, yet, in spite of this most unjust and shameful arrangement, the jury was compelled to bring him in guilty. Sentence of death followed; but instead of execution within twenty-four hours, according to law, it was put off to an indefinite period! "I know that I must die," said the miscreant, after his sentence, to Hart, the jailor: "I don't care about that, it's not the only man I've shot, by more than one."

A day or two after the murder, a white man was set upon at night, and beaten with sticks by two negroes, his offence being that he had detected his black servant lad wearing his new braces, and taking them from him, had given him a cuff. This waylaying a man in the dark, and beating him with bludgeons, is a favourite retaliation for any real or supposed grievance with negroes; and as they are all equally black at night, it is utterly impossible to identify them. Resistance is generally successful, especially by kicking them on the shins (the tender place with negroes). Matters however in Trinidad are decidedly and daily getting worse.

Amongst the whites the principal diseases of Trinadad are miasmatic fevers, which are extremely prostrating to the system. These prevail amongst the planters in the country places, at the end of the wet season, when the sun begins to act on the paludial vegetation; whilst the moral contraction of the heart, so prevalent in this colony, is counterbalanced by its muscular enlargement, so that few are exempt from what is commonly called disease of the heart, to which many fall sudden victims. Inflammation of the liver (hepatitis) is also a common affection. Amongst the female negroes, elephantiasis is extremely common. Generally speaking, negroes and coloured people die from avarice, lingering on with any disorder until it is too late, as their friends seldom call in medical assistance until the sufferer is *in extremis*. Relations of coloured or black people, who would refuse to give a physician two dollars a visit (eight shillings and fourpence), or even perhaps a smaller sum, will, however, spend one hundred dollars, or twenty guineas, on his funeral. As a body the medical men here, amongst black or white, get very badly paid—

"Passato il pericolo,
Gabbato il—*Medico!*"

The quickness with which people, when once taken ill, die, seems peculiar to the West Indies. There is no lingering. One continually hears of acquaintances

being indisposed, perhaps sick, and the next thing is to hear that they are dead. The erroneous ideas prevalent in England, as to the deadliness of the climate of the West Indies, arises from the fact that it often happens men (not women) die within a few days of their arrival, the cause of which fatality is that all persons arriving from cold climates into the Tropics are, from the heat, predisposed to fever; and the system requires lowering, in order to subdue the increased acceleration of the pulse. But it very often happens, from the general coarseness of West Indian society, that the fresh arrival is greeted by a substantial entertainment, degenerating into a regular debauch —highly brandied wines, oceans of ale and porter— winding up with whisky-toddy, or cold brandy and water. Of this *mélange* the new comer is urged to partake, and very often does so to excess, superinducing thereby a tremendous attack of bile, which carries him off in a few hours. This is a very common result with young military officers, and also with young merchants' clerks, with whom the bibulous materials are more abundant than select.

I must repeat, that it is extremely difficult in the West Indies for men to refrain from drink, in the worst sense of the word, so great is the exhaustion from constant perspiration after the slightest bodily exertion. Who that has walked five or six miles, however quietly, through a mountain-pass in the Tropics, has not felt this—when to drink the limpid

stream that percolates at your feet, would, in the heated state of your system, be death!. Then, how grateful is the glass of sangaree, or ale, or even brandy and water. Again, from the want of intellectual society, male or female, "something to drink" is constantly resorted to in order to carry off the inane conversation, where nothing but the most commonplace topics can be discussed. Literature, science, art, all that educated people prize in Europe, is out of fashion here, and would only expose the person speaking of them to the charge of wanting to show off. Here and there, one meets with a stray physician, or a lawyer, who retains a trace of his European education, but these are, indeed, few and far between. The quantities of bottled ale and porter consumed are immense, and there can be no doubt that, from the accelerated action of the blood, combined with stimulants, life is materially shortened within the Tropics.

From these and other causes, consequent on the state of society, young lads sent out from home are very generally ruined. There is no female society worth naming; so that their morals quickly become undermined by dissolute companions of either sex, and the bottle completes the work. There is no class to whom they can look up. The clergy, in consequence of the grade from which they have been taken, custom-house officers, methodist parsons, &c., are vulgar in appearance and manners, and have very little influence; whilst the official people, lawyers,

&c., are, as a class, better known than trusted. Young men, therefore, hear of nothing but unprincipled acts, in those whose position is above their own, and who ought to set a good example. They get imposed upon themselves, and commence in their turn to prey upon society. The honest man is shunned, as a stranger to the fraternity, and a spy, so that every tendency is downwards.

It is a significant sign of the times, that the white inhabitants of Guadaloupe have, as a body, petitioned the United States for land to which they can emigrate, and this, in consequence of the outrageous conduct of the negroes since their emancipation. Is this progression? Is it the right way to march onwards? Yet Guadaloupe is but the beginning, the whole West Indies must ultimately be abandoned to the negroes.

What Trinidad will come to under the present policy of England, I am loth to predict. Planter after planter becomes insolvent; merchant after merchant is bankrupt; and as rats desert a sinking ship, tradesman after tradesman countermands his orders, sells off his goods, and shuts up his shop, to save as much from the wreck as he can. All who, in Trinidad, have capital invested in any way are withdrawing it as quickly as possible. Are these fine colonies to be given up, first to the negro, and then inevitably to the Americans? How can people, reduced from respectability to the grade of paupers, by

an insane policy, retain their allegiance? It is out of the course of human nature to expect it! Will not the child defend itself even from the parent who would strangle it? and fly for protection to those who will afford it? As the Americans notoriously covet these colonies, surely they will compensate England for a little trouble to retain them? What can their value be to North America, beyond what their value ought to be to us?

CHAPTER VI.

DEPARTURE FROM TRINIDAD — GRENADA — ST. VINCENT — KATE FLEMING'S—MONETARY SYSTEM—NEGRO POPULATION—MARKET-PLACE—CORRUPTION OF THE PEOPLE—UNION-HOUSE—ASCENT OF PETIT BON HOMME—NEGRO INVITATION—A NEGRO MELODY.

I LEFT Trinidad, on Saturday, January 6, 1849, by the steamer 'Reindeer' for St. Vincent, a voyage of one hundred and sixty-eight miles, fare twenty dollars, or four guineas, including provisions. By comparison with others on the line, the 'Reindeer' is a slow coach; but, *per se*, she is a magnificent steamer of between six and seven hundred tons, with a sumptuous cabin, and excellent berths, and a table that ought to satisfy the most fastidious. There is also good attendance, and a very civil set of officers. I mention all this particularly, because people at home are interested in knowing how they are treated out here, and because, although the price is high, they do have a good deal for their money.

We got down to the Boccas by nine o'clock, a

distance rated by steamers at nine miles, but in Trinidad reckoned fourteen. To my astonishment, and somewhat to my horror, I found that we were to go through the Bocca del Monos, the narrowest, and (such a dread do the Boccas inspire in Trinidad) considered the most dangerous of all. However, through it we went; and I was told, that the man who has gone through the Bocca del Monos by moonlight, into the Carribean Sea, may make it a boast.

We anchored in the Carinage of Grenada, off the town of St. George's, on Sunday morning. The scene here is not bad; but, barring the mountains, no more like Genoa la Superba than Margate is. As seen from the sea, St. George's is straggling, meagre, and sombre; whilst Genoa, *si non è bella, almeno non è male.* We here took in our coals, and remained in the harbour until twelve o'clock at night. The early morning found us off Carriacou, and we ran along the beautiful Grenadines, and at one, P.M., anchored in the lovely bay of Kingstown, St. Vincent, which seemed, from all that I had yet seen, to be the very *beau ideal* of a West Indian town. Avenues of cocoa-nuts, palms, cactus, cabbage, and Arica palms, and sugar-canes, all but intermingle with the little town, which is backed with the most picturesque range of mountains nearly three thousand feet high, and only three miles off.

I went to "Kate Fleming's" hotel; but this must not be set down for a "Long's," or even a "Hummums;" the only two hotels in Kingstown being literally, boarding-houses, where merchant's clerks,

and clerks in public offices "most do congregate." Both, however, are hotels in *price*, whenever strangers arrive. Kate Fleming's is a regular creole establishment; a wilderness of straggling rooms, with gangs of negro and coloured women idling and lounging about, and jabbering in every corner. These you have to break your way through, in whatever direction you wish to go, and they are by no means sparing of their remarks on any fresh visitor.

My bed-room was one of a suite, partitioned off from each other with boards; so that whatever occured in one chamber was quite audible to the occupants of all the rest. Mine was wretchedly small, and abominably dark, and withal, quite overlooked by a house built up before it. For furniture, I had one chair, two miserable tables, and a huge four-post bedstead, without mosquito curtains, and having only two ragged sheets for bed clothes; and a looking-glass, in which, from bad usage, I could not see myself. For this miserable dog-hole of a bed-room I had to give a dollar a night; breakfast at the general table, but plenty of it, three shillings; dinner at the general table, abundant, but with execrable soup, one dollar; ale, porter, wine, or spirits, in proportion. A coarse abundance in eating, and not particularly select society, characterized the uncomfortable place; but such is the West Indies. Nevertheless, a boarding-house affords the only chance open to a stranger of having a soul to speak to.

The negroes are more civil here than in Trinidad;

but the mulattoes, of whom there are a much greater number in business in Kingstown, in proportion to its size, than Port of Spain, are ludicrously presumptuous, besides being great cheats. Strange to say, the negroes, a little way out of the town, are much improved in morals, not stealing so much as formerly, and getting married instead of living in a state of concubinage. Here, however, the community is chiefly Protestant, which certainly produces higher morality.

The monetary nomenclature of the British West Indies is extremely perplexing. In Trinidad, we had round dollars, cut dollars, half-bits, and stampees: the bit is an imaginary half-franc, and there are no bit pieces, but only half-bits—Louis Phillipe's, imported from Martinique—a horrible abuse. The cut-dollar is a Spanish dollar, having an octangular piece punched out of its centre; value one bit, or fivepence sterling. This was first done in Sir R. Picton's time, in order to prevent the duro or hard-cash dollar from quitting the island; a scheme that has effectually answered, as it is not current elsewhere, and must be exchanged by travellers previous to quitting Trinidad. So many in the colony are interested in importing half-bit pieces, *i. e.*, quarter-francs, intrinsically worth only twopence, though passing for twopence half-penny, and by which they gain from fifteen to twenty per cent, that the Governor has not been able as yet to check the abuse; indeed, hitherto, the introduction of British money has

been neutralized by the apathy, or perhaps the direct interference of the subordinate officials, who are participators in most of the prevailing corruptions. In Grenada all is British money, even to half-pence, cents being unknown.

In St. Vincent we hear of ten dogs, sixpence; five dogs, threepence; bits, or fourpenny pieces. There are also silver threepences and twopences; half-pence are called cents, although the genuine cent of America is refused as not good. Stampees mean pennies. A negro will go through the street bawling some "venture" at "ten dog—ten dog each," or "on'y a tampee," as the case may be. If a shopkeeper require eighteenpence for an article, he will ask a quarter dollar and ten dogs.

It is a psychological fact, a peg on which philosophers may hang a theory, that the American negro, as well as the French, is much more clever and intelligent than the British. The Yankee negro speaks with greater fluency and a far better pronunciation; he expounds, demonstrates, and lays down the law in a very ingenious way. The French negroes (Martinique and Guadaloupe) are also far more intelligent than the English, but, at the same time, much more depraved and demoralized; whilst, of the British negroes, the Barbadians are the most impudent, and the Jamaica negro is esteemed the most intelligent. It seems to be a disagreeable fact that, in a barbarous state, superior intelligence is invariably linked with a higher degree of depravity. Whenever, in the West India islands, we

find a negro "character" talkative, noisy or abusive, we may be sure he is either a Barbadian, an American, or a French negro.

The Portuguese emigrants do not seem to thrive at St. Vincent. They stalk about like spectres, their complexion being a sickly yellow, with blanched cheeks and lips telling of sufferings from malaria fever. Just after my arrival, sixty of them chartered a vessel to take them back to Madeira. They are frugal to abstinence, and few will carry back with them less than one thousand dollars, or two hundred guineas sterling; a pretty sum in Madeira. They are very quiet and orderly, hated by and hating the noisy, vain negro.

St. Vincent is a much more sober place (psychologically speaking) than Trinidad. There is not so much of that horrible drumming and nightly dancing, that annoys one in the southernmost island of the Antilles.

Yet, even in St. Vincent, the same general character of the negro meets one's ears. I have no object, can have no object, but to display the negro character in its true light, to undeceive if possible the world, especially the religious world, respecting its real tendencies. An amiable and religious woman, a Bermudian said to me: "I do not think, Sir, that the negro can be of the same race as ourselves. I have had many servants, but all are alike. All will thieve, not things of importance, but little things not so readily missed; and then, when I know who the thief is, the woman is as cool and impudent as ever. 'I no

tief, missus—I got money; if I want any ting I go buy.' Pretending to be highly indignant that they should be suspected. Yet I, all the while, having absolute proof as to who really was the thief. They have no sort of gratitude, Sir. Do what you will for them—and they are for ever asking some favour or other—the next day they will, if possible, thieve. There is no remedy, as if, in other respects, they are tolerably orderly and decently attentive, it is better to let it pass. Besides, negro servants have no 'characters;' no one gives or requires a 'character' of them, so useless is it known to be.—I pray to God, Sir," added she, "that the time may come when I shall be amongst folks of my own colour."

This, be it remembered, is from the intertropical Bermudian. In fact, Mrs. Houston's character of her negress is a *patented* description, which may serve for the whole race. Mrs. S—— mentioned the case of a very pious English lady, who came out to the West Indies brimful of philanthrophy and Exeter Hall tenderness, but who only lived long enough to disabuse her deluded countrymen and women on the subject. All whites tell the same tale. What have such people to gain by telling lies? They can have no motive, and people out here, even the weakest and least discriminating, see these truths and cannot all combine to misrepresent.

Here also, the same character as elsewhere is given of the mulatto. "The coloured people," I was told, "seem to have all the bad qualities of both blacks and

whites." They are, as a body, artful, lying and swindling.

The easy familiarity of negroes would be provoking, were it not for the absurdity of the thing. A negro never forgets a white man, and if he has only seen him *en passant* in any of the other islands, will claim him for an acquaintance, whilst, in nine cases out of ten, the white is quite unable to recognize his tormentor. "How you do, Misser D——?" "Hilloa! who are you?" "Oh! I see you in Barbadoes, Sar." In fact, I was quite astounded on my return to St. Vincent, at the number of blacks who claimed my acquaintance, not three of whom had I ever spoken to.

Soon after my arrival at St. Vincent, I was disturbed by a wake in the neighbourhood, with psalm-singing all night. I have often before mentioned the piercingly shrill voices of the negresses. This night I had an opportunity of fairly testing the various qualities, as lying awake, listening *per force* to the methodist hymns, I heard a cat squall, and literally it was the softer voice of the two. Grimalkin proved herself to be the *Cat*-alani of the concert.

A negro market place presents some droll scenes, and a stroll through one never fails to repay a looker on. Billingsgate must hide its diminished head, must be silent, at the vituperative vocabulary of a couple of infuriated negresses. So excitable are these people, that a quarter of an hour never elapses without a "scene." Such gesticulation, such pantomime, such a roll out of unintelligible phrases, making it difficult to recognize one's own language! When negroes quarrel,

they seldom look each other in the face. Nay, generally they turn back to back and seem to appeal to the



bystanders, who usually answer each speech made by the belligerents at each other with a shout of laughter, until it comes to: "I mash you up," "I cut your 'troat," when some friends, male or female, judiciously interfere, and lead the infuriated demons off. These are not quite idle threats, as it is under such excitements that most of the cutting and maiming is perpetrated. But the St. Vincent blacks are much less *bellicose* than those of Trinidad, nay, for negresses, some have actually an amiable expression of countenance.

All the West Indian towns teem with "originals," *Scottice*, "daft bodies," "natherals," who are either

born so, or have been made such by their free potations. Sometimes these poor wretches—half rogues, half fools—are noisy and pertinacious and very apt to trouble a stranger, supposing that, as a stranger, he is not up to them, and so will submit to be victimized.

The innate cruelty of the negroes is very revolting, springing evidently, as it does, from their mental obtuseness. Not only do mothers beat their children mercilessly on the most trivial occasions, but the children, in their turn, are cruel to every living thing about them. You rarely see a negro child, even a girl, fondle any animal; but to see them beating their pets is very common. I noticed a little girl having a fowl tied by the leg with a string, which she held firmly, whilst beating the poor bird with a stick. Every misfortune, every little domestic accident or distress, such as a child in the streets breaking a basin or a jug and spilling the contents, elicits only shouts of laughter from the bystanders: the more distress the poor child shows, the more boisterous will be the mirth. No trace of sympathy is ever displayed on such occasions: not a word or gesture of condolence, though it is known the child will be punished with a severe chastisement.

Negroes are very voluble. They will roll out a stream of thick-tongued gabble in one uninterrupted flood. In this case, the capacity of talk is in an inverse proportion to their capability to reason. They are, at the same time, exceedingly emphatic; so as to be, from their noisiness, most disagreeable neighbours.

Every second word is emphasized and jerked out with a vehemence almost distressing.

Everything in St. Vincent connected with official life, as is the case throughout the British Antilles, is described as being extremely corrupt. Almost every place is held by men of the utmost want of principle, full of that noisy intrigue which accompanies the scramble for office of every sort. Compared with their merits or duties, most of these people are egregiously overpaid, and they generally live in sulky seclusion, doing positively nothing to uphold their positions or respectability in the eyes of society.

In the West Indies, "colour," as applied to human beings, is sometimes an anomaly; many so-called people of colour being of as fair a complexion—nay fairer, than many of the whites; having no trace whatever of their African progenitors.

Walking out to the signal post of Dorsetshire Heights, overlooking a magnificent view of the town and its surrounding scenery, I met there a girl of twenty, as fair as anybody that I have ever seen; having light grey eyes, fair auburn hair, straight and silky, and very small hands and feet, yet wearing the Madras handkerchief, which makes those whites who do adopt it look abominably sickly.

"What do you do up here?" I inquired.

"Me live close by; me live down dere," describing a very short distance.

"Are you *white* or coloured?" I inquired.

"I coloured, Sar," was the answer.

Now, here was a girl by far fairer than half the white ladies in the town, absolutely without a tinge of brown, yet still a coloured woman. This, however, was certainly a peculiar case.

Generally speaking, there is in the *quasi* white a coarseness of appearance and of voice which betrays the negro origin. They are often pitted with the small pox and have leprosy in their blood. This innate coarseness of manner and appearance, arising from a black origin generally betrays the secret. Occasionally, however, the reverse is the case. I knew a white creole, of St. Vincent, who, going to Martinique, was received *de haut en bas*. Some months afterwards an unmistakeable brother went to the same parties.

"I saw your brother," said the French agent, "and was sorry that, as a *coloured* man, I could not show him the attention that I would have wished."

"Coloured! that was my own and white brother."

Of course, a thousand apologies were offered for the mistake. It shows that tint is not enough. We must look for the colour in the mind; and, sooth to say, it generally betrays itself in a very short time.

"Dem's too bad—dem won't work—dem tieve too much sar," said my old coloured servant to me; "dem's lazy too much—dem give grand dinner, gran' supper—dem afford it better dan de people dem robs from." What a picture of the state of negro society, even in St. Vincent. These observations were called forth by the sentences pronounced at the Assizes.

The negro population is decidedly worse and more debased than it was on my former visit; so surely does a black community sink lower and lower, at least in a town.

I went on a visit to Mr. L. C——, of the Union estate, on the windward coast. The drive over the bluffs, in a light American curricle, was quite frightful to one unaccustomed to such ways. Only imagine a road cut two-thirds up the side of the huge cliffs of Brescia, or seventy, eighty, and one hundred feet above the sea, which chafed and raged below. No hedge, no parapet, in fact, no protection whatever from going over, should the horses turn restive, the pole break, or any one of the casualties incident to driving unfortunately happen. Sharp ascents and turns, and more unpleasant descents abounded, one wheel frequently grazing the outer edge of the huge precipices, the other all but in a trench, made to carry off the water; whilst above our heads, and often overhanging, masses of conglomerate rose for fifty or sixty feet. Although my friend C——, in spite of having lost an arm, was a capital whip, guiding his horses with a wooden stump, I never could get accustomed to these dangerous heights, nor pass them without holding my breath, and an inward shudder. Otherwise the whole journey is extremely picturesque. Managers' houses and negro huts crowning each minor height, backed by ranges of green mountains, amongst which the bold peaks of the Grand and Petit Bon Homme shoot up conspicuously. Indeed, many of the St. Vincent mountains are extremely grand. Sugar works are invariably in a valley, and generally close by

a mountain stream or river, for the sake of the water power by which on this island they are worked.

Union House is on a headland, three hundred feet above the sea, and so cold that my visit brought on the rheumatism! West India houses are all windows, so that usually one sits in a thorough draft, and nothing can convince creoles that such a course is dangerous. A slight cold, a fever, and they pass to another world; but they remain unmoved. On an average St. Vincent is ten degrees colder than Trinidad.

My host was kind enough to get a guana shot, for my especial gratification. It certainly was most excellent, better decidedly than tropical chickens, nor could it be distinguished from a very superior fowl, otherwise than by the vertebræ of the back. The tail, as large as that of a large eel, is perhaps the best part, where all is good. The animal itself is more peculiar than handsome in appearance. Guanas are very difficult to obtain here. The Caribs are too lazy to search for them, and the negroes are so well off that if they shoot one, they either keep it for their own eating, or only give it up as a great favour.

Since the negroes have become independent from emancipation and extortion, they are a million-fold better off than any other peasantry on the face of the earth. As a labouring population they are thoroughly neutralized. It is they who can now dictate to the whites. Every negro considers himself a gentleman. Of course, from the laziness of the negroes in the towns there is a good deal of poverty. The only thing

perhaps that keeps the West Indies to us, is the dread which the negroes have of coming under the dominion of the Americans. Jonathan is certainly the man to bring them back to their senses, which they have quite lost since they have been taught by the Wesleyans that they are equal to the white man; while our folly in permitting them to purchase lands for a nominal price, and become independent of labour, has made the evil irremediable. Six weeks labour will, at any time, enable a negro to purchase land enough for his wants. Ten dollars will erect his house, and there he is, ready to laugh at labour. Nay, he usually obtains the land on credit, and as the law is a nullity in our West India islands, he either evades the payment altogether, or takes a couple of years to accomplish it. Such has been the result of our legislation.

Fowls are very indifferent in all the islands, Guinea birds, however, are really good. Pork is by far the finest meat in St. Vincent. It is superior to the vaunted American pork, the flesh being white, while the other is black and discoloured.

I made an unsuccessful attempt to ascend the Petit Bon Homme. We went up the Valley of Lauders, a splendid place, and got to a settlement of black Caribs, when it began to rain. However, on we went, and after a weary tramp of five hours up a stupendous height, I was obliged to give in about a mile from the summit, the apex of which, however, is said to be inaccessible. In consequence of the mists we had no views, and so ingloriously retraced our steps. A negro

boy, who carried on his head our basket of provisions, went by his own desire with us, mounting the difficult ascents, and coming down again with apparent ease, where we, unincumbered, could scarcely stumble along.

The apex of the Petit Bon Homme is a mere wall, covered with stunted bushes, and was declared, by a white mason, to be unscaleable. Our guide was a black Carib, a cross between the aboriginal Carib and the negro, nimble as an ibex, and very good-humoured. He was a son of the late King or Chief of the black Caribs. The Petit Bon Hommę is nearly four thousand feet in height.

At night, all the black and coloured population of Kingstown seem to be drunk in the streets. Such is the quarrelling and bawling from male and female, that it is horrible to hear. The negro police sympathise with the disturbers of one's quiet. A negro will be a negro, wheresoever you may place him; whilst, in consequence of the universal ruin here, grog-shops have increased fifty per cent. Managers and overseers, discharged in consequence of the estates having been abandoned, set up rum shops as a *dernier resort*, and by such means get back from the blacks some portion of their extorted gains. But the consequent demoralization is fearful. To an Englishman the West Indies is a banishment from social life. There are a few officials certainly who may be considered gentlemen, or tolerably well-informed persons, but they are generally at sixes and sevens with each other on

points of pride and vanity, or, if the men are on friendly terms, their wives and daughters are at feud. Kingstown is from this reason a wretchedly dull place, especially to a stranger. At night-fall he has nothing left for it but to dine, and go to bed. The coloured people, chiefly shopkeepers, are exceedingly forward and assuming. One or two of them are decent men, but as for the rest, their ignorance is only equalled by their arrogance. I consider the mulattoes of the West Indies the most impudent, forward people in existence.

I spent a few days with my old friend Mr. A——, at Mount Agouti, taking divers walks over the magnificent environs. I was shown the following negro invitation sent to his black housekeeper:

"March 29th, 1849. Mr. A. John Campliment to Miss William and her Brother G. William and Will Be happy of there company on friday Evening 13th instan day of April to a fancy Ball at Gummaiz Village his own house."

This was a subscription ball, the admission to which was a dollar and a half (six shillings and threepence), for which sum tea, coffee, ginger-beer, wine, cakes, and supper were provided. The music was two fiddles, a tambourine, and a triangle. On inquiring the kind of dances, I was answered "quadrilles," but, as the black lady continued, "only *decent* dances were permitted, not dem wulgar, like de caffee treat." The coffee treat is equivalent to an English hop, where drinking and fighting are the accompaniments. The banjo, or tum-tum, supplants the more refined fiddle and triangle

and the dancers pay ten dogs, or sixpence, each time they dance. The coffee treat takes place in each locality about once a-week; the fancy-ball about once a fortnight.

One must not look for poverty or wretchedness amongst negroes. As we have heard something lately of negro melodies, I subjoin a genuine St. Kitts negro song, by Sam Matthews:

"Las' Saturday night, man,
A' cum na mi house, man,
A' no tink pon noton (nothing),
A sit down so saftly,
Hungry da bang me (bang—vex),
I look 'pon de shelf, man.
I look for de ninyam (ninyam—food),
Sal' fish. Corn wangoo (corn wangoo—boiled Indian corn),
Corn wangoo and callaloo (callaloo—a sort of spinach),
Ya me da eat away;
I eat way 'pon ninyam—
Ninyam so sweet now—Eye, eye, a—a—ay!
Massa da calla me (call me),
He cal' me na great house (na—to). Ey—ey—a—a, &c.
I put by de ninyam,
Ya, me da go now;
He tell me: 'Mi boy now,
Cubenna, mi boy now (Cubenna—his name),
You taka dis paper,
I go to mi massa
You run na Basterre man (na—to; Bastarre—the capital of St. Kitts),
You gie Dactar Thompson,
Tomarrar marning you bring cum de hanswer.'
Heart bin so vex now. Ey—ey—a—a, &c.
I taka de paper; I run na de great road,

I meet Dactar Thompson,
I meet um 'pon hos-back.
He redee de papar; he tell me: 'Mi boy now
Go 'lang you' homo (home);
Tomarrar marning, I send cum de hanswer.'
Heart bin so glad now. Ey—ey—a—a—eye.
Yamee da run, man, yamee dig, man (yamee—now, here I am running).
I run na mi house, man!
I caall 'pon mi wife, man!
I push um—I shove um."
He wont gie mi hanswer;
I wake um at las', man,
I tell um 'bout someting,
Someting da waalk de (de—there);
He waalk na mi chamber,
He tell me: 'he b'lieve say de Jumbee.' Ey—ey—a—a, &c
I look for mi bow-'tick (club, or heavy stick),
Ya mi da lick wi' (which I beat with),
I lick 'way 'pon Jumbee,
Jumbee da bawl de'—Ey—ey—a—a—eye.
He jump na de back-door;
I meet Uncle Quacoo,
I tell um 'bout Jumbee;
Jumbee bin waalk de',
He waalk de' wi' shoe on'
He tell me, since he bin barn now,
He nebber bin hearee,
Jumbee could waalk de', and walk wi' de shoe on.
He tell me, he b'lieve say: 'Da, Massa!'
Ey—ey—a—a—eye!
Massa go killa me—oh!

CHAPTER VII.

EASTER AT ST. VINCENT—ORDNANCE CLERKS—CHARACTER OF THE CREOLES—MRS. CARMICHAEL—MY HOUSEKEEPER—IMPOSTORS,

ONE of the grand festivals of the St. Vincent negroes is Easter, when a whole week is spent in dancing and revelry. No labour of any sort is expected to be done, either by the agricultural labourer, artisan, or craftsman. The means of living are so easy to the negro, as to enable him to waste half his existence in revelry and dissipation, of which he fully avails himself; and at this season idlers obtain money to spend by robbery.

On returning from Mount Agouti, I found that a coloured lad had been attempting to break open my lodgings. He was, however, detected and recognized; but as everything connected with municipal regulations, police, or law, is at the lowest ebb in St. Vincent, I was dissuaded from applying officially to any

magistrate about the matter. It appeared, also, that any attempt to break into a house, if unsuccessful, is not punishable by law. "It is a curious fact," said a Kingstown gentleman to me; "that our greatest thieves are the best dressed, smartest, and most respectable looking negroes—those whom you would the least suspect." Insane legislation at home, and wretchedly inane local governments, are the cause of half the evils out here. Men without character, and steeped in debt, with its degradations, fill three parts of the official situations throughout the West Indies, whilst giving uniforms to the clerks in the Ordnance and the Commissariat, has laid the foundation for embezzlement and dissipation, "in order to support the rank, &c."—rank of what?—of a civil branch of the military service, filled by men of inferior manners and habits, not fitted by education for the society of gentlemen. The consequences of this folly are just becoming apparent. During my stay of eighteen months in Trinidad, one head clerk of the Ordnance, a drunkard and a gambler, embezzled the government money, and absconded to America. His successor, as head of the office, was so continually drunk, as to be utterly incapable of business, and died in the hospital of *delirium tremens*; and soon afterwards, the Ordnance clerk in Kingstown was suspended for embezzlement. As far as uniform goes, they have the look of officers, without the restraints which good society imposes on gentlemen, and they run into all sorts of extravagance in order to sustain

the character of dashing fellows amongst their set.

The ignorance at home of even the best informed people, on the actual state of society in the British West Indies, renders it quite absurd to dictate to those on the spot, what shall be, or shall not be done. It is a state of society so peculiar as to have no parallel in any other part of the world. It should, therefore, be made the business of the various governors, the chief justices, and of the highest law officers combined, to draw up a code of laws adapted to the peculiar social state of each island with its dependencies, since one will materially differ from the other, and whilst the principles should approximate to the laws of the mother country, the actual laws must be modified to suit the exigencies of the individual colony. The great stumbling-block to general principles will be found in the peculiar character of the negro, an anomaly amongst white men, a race with furious animal passions, acting on a positively inferior mental capacity, so inferior that neither education nor cultivation will bring it even near the capacity of the white. Unfortunately, most of those in office in the colonies have come out on a certain principle, which their actual experience has proved to be cant, and they have sunk into a state of apathy, determined to let things take their course, and retain their salaries as long as they can. The consequence is, that all things have a retrograde tendency, and must continue to do so until a general

disruption breaks the union of the West Indies with England.

I found in St. Vincent, as in Trinidad, that amongst the creole population, there is a good deal of agueish fever, although Europeans seem to be exempt from it. It probably results from the undermining influence of climate on several generations, predisposing the system to disease. There is also a good deal of leprosy amongst the white and coloured tribes; though as far as possible it is carefully concealed from society. It usually shows itself in contractions of the limbs, especially of the hands. But altogether, St. Vincent is considered to be the most healthy island in the Antilles. During the year 1849 fever and ague prevailed to an alarming extent in the Grenadines, Bequia, and Carriacou. This is difficult to account for, as these islets are particularly arid, not one of them possessing a river, and the inhabitants depending for water entirely upon rain.

There is little doubt, that Europeans within the Tropics benefit materially by living and sleeping virtually in the open air, as, if there be glazed windows at all, the upper parts are invariably let down at night, whilst in the generality of cases, even the closed *jalousies* allow a free circulation of air through the apartment. Of dust, there is little or none; fires are not kept, excepting wood fires for culinary purposes, in out-houses: so, although warm, the air is pure, and free from those particles which load it in

England, and which, forming a deposit on the lungs, first clog, and afterwards irritate those organs, laying the foundation for the pulmonary complaints so fatal to Europeans; besides which, West India houses are necessarily near the sea, or up in the pure atmosphere of the mountains. One great drawback to health is the want of warm baths, so essential in hot climates, whilst danger from sharks and other fish of prey, and the apathy of the whites in not providing proper places, prevents any advantage of bathing, from the proximity of most towns to the sea.

Generally speaking, the white male creoles of the British West Indies are a wretched set, ludicrously proud and vain, and miserably ignorant. There is no want of natural talent, but a general ignorance of all that other people know. They are idle, careless, and often dissipated. There is no regularity in their business matters, and the value of time is less understood amongst them than even by a fashionable London marchioness. Business engagements are never punctually kept, and a circumstance came under my own observation that would seem incredible to an Englishman. A young lawyer informed me that he had to be in court on urgent business by ten o'clock in the morning, and at half-past ten I met him escorting his wife.

"Hilloa! why I thought you were to have been in court at ten."

"So I was there, but neither the Chief Justice, nor

the barristers, not even a solitary witness appeared; so I came away."

Imagine what a court of justice that must have been! But everything is conducted here in the same *poco curante* manner.

Receipts are rarely given for money, and, if asked for, all sorts of evasions are practised to avoid the trouble. Bargains are loosely made, and endless disputes and litigations are the consequence.

"You told me so and so two months ago."

"No, I didn't. I said," &c., &c., and so in this disjointed, shambling manner do things go on. To break an engagement, no matter how serious its character, is a thing almost of course, and nothing astonishes a creole so much as punctuality. He never dreams of such a thing, and cannot understand that you should consider exactness in time or money a matter of any consequence. A longer acquaintance with St. Vincent, only convinced me that it was as unprincipled and profligate as any other West Indian island. White men are there without faith, and white women, as well as the native black population, without virtue; and those, too, among the leaders of society, who ought at least to be bright examples to the rest.

It is strange, but too true, that, once out of Europe, society rapidly degenerates in morals and high principle. Turkey, Persia, the East generally, and the United States in all respects, with the whole of South

America, are most abominably bad; and I must include in this censure the Antilles.

Excepting perhaps Mrs. Trollope's good tempered, truthful book on America, there has not been a work more grossly and unjustly abused than Mrs. Carmichael's excellent book on the West Indies. Throughout the islands that I have as yet visited, she is denounced continually by some mendacious epithet or other, and even her own relations, both in Trinidad and in St. Vincent, disclaim connection with her, asserting that she was notorious in her own family for habitually not speaking the truth. Whenever I endeavoured to borrow her book, some excuse was made to prevent my seeing it—"It was mislaid," or "lost," or "destroyed," and never forthcoming. In England I had read the book twice or thrice, but of course only imperfectly remembered it, and my object was therefore to read it on the spot when I had become competent to judge of its accuracy. At last I obtained the loan of it from a *nearly* white young man, who, however, did not fail to caution me that it was "full of lies." In this copy, as I have before remarked, were annotations or comments written in pencil by various readers, the one often flatly contradicting the other.

That there are a few trifling inaccuracies in the book, such as enumerating Turks amongst the population of Trinidad, is most true, whilst the twenty Chinese who were there at that time have all disappeared. But there are fewer mistakes or exaggerations than can be

detected in most books, though the truth did not suit the views of the political parties at home, whilst the coloured races, with their wretched vanity, are furious that people at home should have an idea of the truth. Considering that the "Domestic Manners of the West Indies" was published nineteen years ago (1833), it is wonderful how little the character of the black and coloured people has changed.

In the course of May, 1849, small-pox broke out at Guadaloupe, Dominica, Martinique and St. Lucia, and great was the alarm created, as, from the corrupt humours and leprous taints in the negro and coloured tribes, combined with the climate of the tropics, the ravages are frightful. Quarantine was instantly established, and all the small trade between the islands broken up. We had, in St. Vincent, an infection scarcely less horrible, the craw-craw, a pustular itch of the most inveterate sort. It was introduced by a cargo of liberated Africans, and so closely did it resemble the small-pox, that only a conclave of medical men decided that it was not the same. Many died from it. The colonial steamers, however, notwithstanding the quarantine, passed as usual from island to island with perfect impunity, free from all sanitary restrictions. There is nothing like privilege!

There is something so absolutely ridiculous in the pride and vanity of the negroes and of the coloured tribes, that one would be convulsed with laughter were it not that its constant recurrence is extremely annoying.

My old housekeeper, Miss Betsy, a coloured dame of sixty, having, from fever and ague, the usual elephantiasis in both legs, and who has been a slave, on my ordering her one day to go to market, told me: "Me no feel dispose! Me no want to go!" After a hint that, if she did not go, I might not feel disposed, to pay her weekly wages, she reluctantly obeyed. The reason for not wishing to go will hardly be credited: it was because she had "not got stockings on," and she could only make her appearance at market *en grande tenue*, as a lady.

"You tink, because I wait on you, I not nobody at all!" The endeavour of the coloured people to persuade a stranger that they have been above their present station is universal, but, as may be believed, is usually a failure. The "upper class" negroes consider it derogatory to carry anything on their heads, although it is a universal practice with "de common niggar." Their pride is, therefore, vexatiously shewn in the difficulty there is in getting anything for the table unless it be expensive. Execrable waxy Bermuda potatoes at fourpence a-pound, or disagreeable white boiling yams at somewhat less, do very well; but excellent spinach (a dish which the coloured creoles dress very well *à la Française*), at a penny a bundle, is beneath their notice, and nothing short of a peremptory order will obtain "de green bush," as they contemptuously call it. A planter of great respectability complained seriously to me of the impossibility

of getting anything for his table if it were at all cheap; his head man absolutely refusing to degrade himself by purchasing "tings only fit for niggar," and considering his dignity compromised by his master's want of proper pride. It is also considered very derogatory to require any change out of a piece of money, and indeed change is very rarely tendered, but must be asked for. I scarcely recollect an instance of my coloured servant producing change until it was demanded. The only way, however, to check a thousand depredations, is to be extremely strict in making them account for every farthing given them for purchasing any article; for, if they succeed only once, you are set down as fair game for every sort of extortion. As for expecting any article of food at the market price, that is too absurd; and I never ventured to mention such a thing. Jack-fish, for luncheon, sells in the market ten for a bit; but I never could get more than five for the same sum. I may here observe that three parts of the population of Kingstown live chiefly on jack-fish, which is a cheap and nutritious food, caught by millions in the bay, fifty yards from the shore. The jack-fish is about the size of a pilchard, but less strong, with firmer flesh.

There is something very funny in the idea of ladies and gentlemen who can neither read nor write, and who condescend to be hucksters or porters, washwomen or seamstresses; yet these wretched creatures have been so spoiled by philanthropists as to

believe themselves fully equal to any whites, whatever their accomplishments or social position.

In the British West Indies, as in America, I am sorry to say that respectability of character is held in but little esteem, and people do not hesitate to associate with men whom they willingly denounce, and admit to be scoundrels.

Bad repute never seems to affect social position, and I incurred much odium as a "proud man, who thought no one good enough for him," simply because I avoided the acquaintance of public defaulters and of persons universally spoken of as unprincipled, dishonourable men: such people being generally forward in scraping acquaintance with strangers. In these places, scandal is so rife, you must be deaf not to hear the history of every man and woman in the place within a few weeks; and, till this is known, new acquaintances should be shunned.

Charlatans, daguerreotypists, and other adventurers, the most monstrous quacks I ever met, abound here. One fellow, who calls himself the Baron de ——, late pianist to the Emperor of ——, and a hundred similar dignitaries, teaches singing in the Rubini style! tunes and repairs pianofortes, and has only condescended to come to the Antilles to look into the state of musical science, and to found schools of music. Half the people here were delighted with the Baron, because of his title, which it is almost needless to say, is an imposture. The Baron travels with a

huge trunk of doubloons, *gold* pieces, worth £316, which a discarded servant does not hesitate to say, are only *lead*, cut round to the dollar size, and wrapped in paper, he having been employed at the job. These are the sort of people by whom the wretched aristocracy of the West Indies are gulled.*

Another fellow, who was a band-boy of the —— regiment, announces himself as Professor.

* Baron de —— is a Polish Jew (spy). He has a pension from the Russian Government.

CHAPTER VIII.

DEPARTURE FROM ST. VINCENT—A FRENCH SOCIALIST—ST. LUCIA —MARTINIQUE—ARRIVAL AT GUADALOUPE—POINT CAPISTERRE —A FRENCH TOWN—MOULE—THE GREAT EARTHQUAKE—FRACAS WITH FRENCH OFFICERS—LES SAINTES—BASSETERRE—COMPARISON WITH THE ENGLISH COLONIES—FRENCH SOLDIERS —NEGRO DEMONSTRATIONS.

I LEFT St. Vincent at one P.M., on the 9th of May, 1849, for Guadaloupe, amidst a deluge of rain, by the 'Trent' steamer, fare twenty-five dollars (five guineas). For a few days previously rain had poured down in cataracts. Everything was wet and sloppy; and the passengers were standing about in corners, all wrapped in the blues.

We first stood across to the uninteresting coast of Barbadoes, where a change of steamers was to take place. This part of the passage was dead to windward; but daybreak found us at Bridgetown, where we found that our steamer was to be ordered home, and therefore we were not to be transferred to another. The 'Trent' is a large ship, having a flush upper-deck, two hundred and fourteen feet long, and very

comfortable single cabins for the passengers; she was not a favourite, however, as the table and the attendance were very inferior compared to the rest of the line. We had about eighty cabin passengers, including French, Germans, and Spaniards, to be dropped at their respective islands, with a number of British officers going to England for their health; and were consequently much crowded.

The great charm in travelling in a steamer out here is, that it is scarcely possible to be on board an hour without recognizing some acquaintance or other, often formed thousands of miles away in another direction. Foreigners cannot understand the feeling that prompts British officers, *en voyage,* to throw off all the insignia of their rank, even to articles of *bijouterie*—to wear flannel jackets, and all sorts of bizarre, negro hats, and to be the least assuming and intrusive of any on board. The Frenchman would be *décoré,* and an American wear his "go-to-meetin' clothes," with silk stockings and pumps. We had a French socialist on board, who was always losing his luggage, and constantly in a fume. His features were stamped with unmistakeable vulgarity; and light shaggy eyebrows, moustachios, and beard, on a red face, and a round Bardolphian nose, sufficiently announced his principles. A linen jacket, far too short, and showing the buckle of his waistcoat, with baggy linen trowsers, in the pockets whereof he carried his hands, rendered him quite a picture. He favoured the amused passengers with his opinions on a variety of social subjects; and on the

passage out from Europe, he endeavoured to tear down the crown, and other insignia of royalty from the paddle-box of the steamer, and got threatened with a straight-waistcoat, as a consequence.

Daybreak of the 11th found us off the south-west end of St. Lucia; the most romantic part of the most romantic, and most unhealthy island of the West Indies, and close to the Pitons,* two immense pyramids of rocks, which shoot up from the sea two thousand seven hundred and ten feet and two thousand six hundred and eighty feet, guarding the portals of the Souffrière. They are of grey rock, scantily covered with bush, are perfectly inaccessible, and are full of the most venomous serpents, with which, indeed, St. Lucia so abounds, that several people are annually killed by their attacks. Mr. W—— of the medical staff, who was stationed there a year and a-half, informed me, that no one dreamed of walking through the woods, or on the grass, and that these reptiles often presented themselves even on the beaten track; so that the utmost caution was necessary in walking. They had been killed even under the mess-table, and on the steps of the mess-room; and at night it was always necessary to carry a light to cross to any part of the barracks. The soldiers are frequently bitten, but obtaining prompt surgical aid, they escape with life, though often with the loss of a limb.

* Gros Piton two thousand seven hundred and ten; Petit Piton two thousand six hundred and eighty; Piton des Canaries two thousand five hundred and eighty-five.—*Reid's Map.*

The miasma of St. Lucia is so fatal, that death from fever is an every-day occurrence. It spares neither sex nor station, and so many governors have died there, that people are shy of accepting the post. It must be a strong ambition that would covet to rule over the Upas valley of Ceylon.

The small town of Souffrière stands at the bottom of a little bay behind the Pitons; but Castries, the capital of the island, is fifteen miles to the northward, lying in a fine little bay running two miles inland. It is the seat of government; and the bungalow of the Governor, with the barracks perched high on a mountain to the right of the town, form rather conspicuous objects. The mails are landed from the open sea, as the steamer does not go in.

As people who can in any way help themselves will not live in St. Lucia, it is a wretchedly poor place. Even the negroes do not like living in the mountains, with myriads of serpents for their nearest neighbours. I saw but few trees, but the country seemed covered with low bush. St. Lucia is a military government. About a month previous to my visit the negroes had revolted, but were speedily put down, with a loss of eight killed and three wounded.

At five o'clock P.M., we arrived off St. Pierre, Martinique. The heights which rise above the town, and ultimately expand into mountains, were beautifully cultivated, looking like a rich garden. When I arrived, a tolerable crop was expected; but it was considered that the next must be a dead failure, as no

preparations can be made to prepare the crop, the negroes refusing to labour, except on their own grounds.

The negro boatmen came off in canoes, and were very impudent; indeed, there was every indication of a battle between some of them, and a boat-load of our military officers going on shore. The rival boatmen trying to run aboard ours, because another boat had been preferred to theirs. The Martinique negroes are considered to be the most clever, but at the same time the most mischievous and depraved of all the West Indian blacks. It was some of these black revolutionists who, after committing all sorts of atrocities, and being expelled from Martinique, stimulated the St. Lucia negroes to revolt. Major Moore of the 54th, who commanded the firing party at Castries on that occasion, was on board our steamer, and turned out to be an old acquaintance of mine when in Ireland. There is no doubt that the promptitude shown by the military on that occasion, saved the white population of St. Lucia from massacre.

Leaving Martinique, we passed Dominica in the night; and on Saturday, May 12th, at six A.M., I landed at Basseterre, in Guadaloupe. At this early hour the shore was anything but picturesque. Immense clouds scowled over the dark mountains at the back of the city, which at first sight seemed to be fortified all round, an appearance created by walls at intervals to resist the break of the sea. We landed at a neat wooden jetty, and passed to what might be

called the Grand Place, having rows of trees and a large hotel in front. Passports were demanded, but although my *compagnon de voyage* was unprovided with one, no objection was made to his landing. Our baggage was only slightly inspected at a temporary *douane* on the shore; and after the usual row with the negro boatmen and porters, we got ensconced at the Hotel de l'Europe, a dirty noisy place, the head quarters of all the billiard players in the city. What with the rattling of the balls, the spitting, the noise, the incessant cigar smoking, joined to a smell exceedingly like that of French *latrinæ*, we found ourselves uncomfortable enough. As some compensation, the people were extremely civil. Our *déjeúner à la fourchette*, and our dinner also, were very good; but we paid four francs a-piece for each meal. At first we found Guadaloupe much dearer than the British Colonies, as strangers are invariably imposed upon.

An opportunity occurring the same afternoon for Point à Pitre, a distance of forty-five miles, we, at six o'clock, set off in a sloop for our destination. The fare was two dollars; negroes and operatives pay but one, whilst government allows three dollars for its officials. There is a bridle-road over the mountains, and a post-road, by Dolé, but our luggage precluded the possibility of our going either way.

Our course lay round the south west point of Guadaloupe, and was a dead beat from Basseterre to Point Capisterre. We stretched over to Les Saintes, a group of small islands twelve miles south of the capital; and

as a strong current as well as the wind was against us, we did not reach Point Capisterre, or the spot where the coast bends northward and the east wind would be fair, until eight o'clock on Sunday evening, having been knocking about in a chopping sea all day, with but little to eat and that nasty enough. Dominica and the low unpicturesque island of Maria Galante, were in sight all the time. Twice did we near Point Capisterre, and twice were we driven by the current ten miles back.

Point Capisterre is merely a low point of land, distinguished by a few bushes. On our left rose the lofty range of the Souffrière Mountains, their tops hidden in the clouds, but which, from the sea to their bases, three miles inland, seemed to be a well cultivated plain. At last, by eleven o'clock at night, a slant of wind enabled us to reach Point à Pitre, through a sufficiently dangerous channel.

We went to the Hôtel des Bains, the scene of a dreadful catastrophe during the great earthquake of 1843, the *salle-à-manger* having been crowded at the moment, when all, save two or three, were buried in the ruins. At present, this hotel is to be avoided for its preposterously high charges. When too late, we heard of another hotel in every respect more comfortable, and bed and board provided for eight francs a-day. This hotel belonged to Mlle. Sasiasse, and was in the Rue de Noziere.

Point à Pitre, though not the capital, is by far the most important town on the island, and before the

earthquake, won the *sobriquet* of *le petit Paris*. It has several good streets, many good shops, a fine Place d'Armes, barracks, arsenal, and a large church, now rebuilding, excellent quays, off which several large ships for France and the United States were at anchor, though naturally the greater part were for French ports; Marseilles, Toulon, Havre, Dunkirk, &c. By the way, instead of paying twenty-five or thirty pounds for a passage to Europe, from Barbadoes, Trinidad, or St. Vincent, you have finer ships, and are by far better fed, from the French islands, for seventy-five dollars, or fifteen pounds sterling. I saw ships in Point à Pitre of six hundred tons burthen, whilst our West Indiamen seldom exceed three hundred and fifty.

Point à Pitre is not on Guadaloupe proper, but on Grande-Terre; for the two islands, though under the same government, are actually distinct, being divided by a small channel called La Rivière Salée, half a mile or more in width, and deep enough to allow large ships to pass through from north to south, avoiding either the eastern or the western coast. The southern end debouches on Point à Pitre. The western island, with its range of mountains, is always distinctively mentioned as Guadaloupe.

Point à Pitre is essentially French. Soldiers and marines crowd the streets, and one sees everywhere red tufts, red worsted epaulettes, white gaiters, slovenly gaits, and the same grubby look which greets the eye in France. There is also the same rolling of drums,

and cracked tones of the post-horn and trumpet, with all the panoply of the French army. Musters, making our military men stare at the *sans-façon* mode of doing things. The officers look like pigs in uniform, our sergeants being more gentlemanlike in manner and deportment than the mass of French commissioned officers. The streets of Point à Pitre are paved, and lighted after the French fashion, the lamps being pendant in the middle of the street.

I left the town at three P.M., by diligence, a mere caravan, for Le Moule, seven leagues off. The fare was eight francs, or about fourpence a mile. For the first few miles the road passes through an undulating country of round-topped hills, covered with second-growth forests, and at a post-station emerges on a long, dreary, arenaceous plain, scantily covered with vegetation; literally, what in England would be called downs, with sugar estates scattered at intervals; but the country is perfectly uninclosed, and has a very bare, uninteresting, Flemish appearance. The soil is thickly interspersed with a semi-vitrified, white, friable limestone.

In this part of the world, the motive power for the sugar works is windmills, with pointed tops *tout à fait française,* whilst herds of light-coloured buffaloes, from Senegal, having humps on their shoulders, and tremendous horns, roam lazily along. These animals, though wild enough at first, are described as being extremely intelligent and docile as soon as they understand their work, readily obeying the voice.

As we approached Moule, the country again began to undulate, presenting some very nervous descents down very precipitous hills, but which our Jehu managed to admiration. The land seemed almost bare of trees, though a few stunted bushes were scattered at long intervals.

We came in sight of the sea on the east coast, with a long line of cliffs running northward. The coast is encompassed with reefs, over which the sea breaks with great violence, though within they afford many bathing places secure from sharks. At six o'clock we entered Moule, which is merely a large village, having a custom-house, two hotels, a church and *douane*, two vicars and a *curé*.

The Hotel Aigoin, where we put up, was the head quarters of the marine officers. The exterior of the house was very dingy and shabby, but the *table d'hôte* turned out to be extremely good, and was frequented by the *élite* of the village.

This part of the world has been ruined, first by the terrible earthquake of 1843, which, in a few minutes, overthrew everything; afterwards by a hurricane, and then by the Revolution of 1848, or rather its result —emancipation! The proprietors are selling their estates for anything they will fetch, as the emancipated negro refuses to work. One gentleman to whom I had introductions had left for France; another had gone to the United States; a third thought of leaving his estate in *statu quo*, and travelling as an artist! This last, M. Pierre Claratte, a most intelligent person,

informed me that he had canes enough at that moment on his ground to yield two thousand pounds worth of sugar, but all that he expected, or dared hope for, was to get in one-third of the crop. The negroes, who are all independent of estate labour, and can live on plantains, manyoc, and fowls, which they raise themselves, care for nothing so long as they can drum and dance, and will do no hard work. All these islands must relapse, it would seem, like Hayti, into a state of barbarism. La Moule is a dull, unattractive place, and on the occasion of my visit was full of small pox, which carried off the negroes by wholesale, as they took no care of themselves, and were too penurious to employ a doctor. The white civilians were extremely polite to us, but the marine officers maintained a different deportment. The hatred of England, so fostered by the Prince de Joinville, broke out in a most unprovoked and ungentlemanlike manner at the *table-d'hôte*. "I detest your country," said a captain of marines to my companion, Mr. W——, "if any *remboulevеrsement* should take place—if we could but once get alongside your ships, then you should see!" Then came "Waterloo," (muttered) "Napoleon—St. Helena," all this accompanied by clenched fists, gnashed teeth, and other symptoms of impotent rage. He said that twenty-five years ago, in St. Helena, a sentry had called him a "French dog." I prctended not to hear or to understand; but my companion got rather excited. It is but fair to say, that the rest of the company not only took no part in this, but showed by their looks

how much they disapproved of it. Still, in this out of the way place, it was not a pleasant position for two strangers to be in, as the same *animus* was sufficiently visible in another captain of marines, a great brute in manner and language. However, the next morning this man came up all smiles, offered his hand to me, and reverted to the *plaisanterie* of the evening before—a *mauvaise plaisanterie* however. I affected to laugh the thing off, so the matter ended. The standard expletives of French liberty, equality, and fraternity, rattled about our ears all meal-time like the "Hailstone Chorus," repeated *ad nauseam*, whenever we sat down at table.

I was rather amused by noticing that the house clocks invariably struck the hour twice, the second time a few seconds after the first; not a bad plan, should the first iron note of time escape notice.

The Port of Moule is very small, and at this moment contained only two coasting schooners. Large ships, however, sometimes visit it, in spite of the innumerable reefs that hem it in, and seem to defy approach. There is a salt-water river here, dry at the beach, and spanned by a well-constructed wooden bridge. The surrounding country is exceedingly naked and unpicturesque in every direction. From the high downs above La Moule, the little island of La Désirade, with its white cliffs, is in sight.

On the 17th of May, I left Moule for Point à Pitre, and not liking the exorbitant charges of the Hotel des Bains, got on board a fine schooner bound for Basse-

terre. On my way a negro porter with a full crop of small-pox, showing *white*, like mistletoe, on his dark skin, would be most officious, and handle my traps in spite of my remonstrances.

For the first four miles from the city, the channel of Point à Pitre is exceedingly difficult and dangerous, owing to a group of rocks some distance from the shore, called Les Cochons, and a long reef running out from a rocky island, which they choose to call Isle à l'Anglais. All this broken ground is well buoyed; but is nevertheless a close shave, even in the day time. At night there is a light near Les Cochons. Taken altogether it well merits its name of Petit Cul-de-Sac.

From the baffling Point Capisterre, we stretched over to the group of islands called Les Saintes, a collection of round-topped, green hills, each height crowned by a tower or fort. These isolated hills are so placed as to form a beautiful bay, almost land-locked, and on the shore of the largest island is a little village, inhabited solely by officials and *employés*, attached to a large fortress at its eastern end. There is, however, an hotel, and altogether it struck me as a lovely little spot for those who sought seclusion.

To the south, Dominica looms like a cloud, Maria Galante is to the east, whilst northward, on Guadaloupe Proper, rises the lofty range of the Souffrière, one thousand five hundred and fifty-seven metres in height. The sea is blue and beautiful, so that the *solo cum sola* might be enjoyed to perfection.

We reached Basseterre, by sun-down, and I was

directed to the *Pension* of Mademoiselle Eloise Corno, where, for a good-sized chamber and board, I engaged to pay thirty-two dollars a month, though at first three francs a night were demanded for the chamber alone.

Basseterre is the seat of government, but with that exception is a very inferior place to Point à Pitre. There is no harbour, only an open roadstead, in which on my arrival, there were but two schooners of war. one bark, and a few coasting sloops. Like most places seen first from the water, the city disappoints expectation. Three or four tolerably wide, but wretchedly paved streets, run parallel with the sea, intersected at right angles by others that mount up sharp ascents towards the interior. Behind the town a table-land rises up, plateau after plateau, crowned by the fine range of the Souffrière, nine miles back, and scarcely ever free from clouds. To the south, and within two miles, is an inferior range of forest-girt mountains, Houël-Mont, or the Mounts du Vieux Fort, very picturesque *per se,* but sinking into insignificance in sight of the grand range.

There is a fine Place d'Armes, Champ d'Arbord, planted all round with cabbage-palms and mango trees alternately, giving an exceedingly interesting and truly tropical character to the parade ground. On one side is the neat wooden palace of the Governor, and some of the public offices; and south of it are some magnificent barracks, the road terminating at a large fortress. Each assailable point is also defended by innumerable

forts and batteries, all in excellent order, better, I should say, than with us; the munitions of war, guns, mortars, and shot, looking as if they had all been varnished. The other noticeable buildings are the *Mairie* and two churches. At the back of the town is an excellent reservoir, affording an ample supply of good water to some very ugly fountains; and a small rocky river or mountain stream, filled with wash-women, divides the city into two parts. Indeed one of the peculiarities of Basseterre is a deep gutter in every street, with a rush of water running down, the sound of which, to the ear of a stranger, gives the idea of its always raining. The streets, which are excruciatingly paved, with slippery, round-topped stones, are kept clean by negro convicts, chained in pairs.

Altogether, as far as Basseterre is concerned, one day is sufficient to see all that is remarkable. From the Souffrière range completely cutting off the east or trade wind, the city is so hot as to render walking very fatiguing, and the streets do not permit a carriage to be used. To ride on horseback, over such a pavement, is highly dangerous.

I called on M. M——, Councillor *à la Cour d'Appel.* He described the country at present as being in a miserable state for want of capital. The emancipation was so sudden, as to leave the planters actually without resources. If, however, the French government gives the promised compensation for the slaves, a million sterling, then all will be right; but that cannot be hoped for at present. M. M——, described the

negroes of Guadaloupe as a population *très douce*. It appears that they somewhat fear the capability of the planter to pay them for their labour.

Basseterre has four hotels—the Hôtel de l'Europe, opposite the jetty, with a billiard table and berths; Hôtel Celanire, much quieter; Hôtel des Bains, close to the Church of St. François; and Hôtel Clarisse, 22, Grand Rue du Cours. This last is considered to be by far the most quiet and respectable of them all—there is a *table-d'hôte*, and the brother, M. Pedemonte, is the agent for our steam ships. I called at the Hôtel Clarisse, and saw an excellent *salle-à-manger*, and good bed rooms—price, for board and lodging, for a few days, two dollars a day, or thirty dollars a month for everything.

I walked up to Morne Désiré, a most desirable point above the city, to obtain a fine view of the Souffrière, and saw the proprietor, M. Belost, a courteous and friendly gentleman, who speaks very fair English, and has been in England and the United States. The works were standing still. "Out of fifty negroes that I used to employ," said he, "I have about five at work. At present, there is neither law nor police." It must be understood, that although the old estate negroes will not work for their former masters, they still retain the houses and provision grounds belonging to the proprietor, paying no rent; and perhaps, in the present state of things, any attempt to dispossess them of this monstrous usurpation would lead to revolt. The fact is, that the negroes, being aliens of another

and an inferior race, and fairly obtained by purchase or inheritance, had no rights as citizens, whilst the owners of the soil had rights, and ought to have been protected, before a sweeping ruin had been permitted to overwhelm them, and all redress denied.

There are no venomous serpents in Guadaloupe, nor any dangerous reptiles, except the centipede and the Socialist. There is, however, a snake called coloubre, perfectly harmless and never molested, as it is a great destroyer of rats, the bane of the planter. The beds in Basseterre are without musquito-curtains; nevertheless, there are a few maringouens, as mosquitoes are here called.

I do not think that revolutions or republicanism are held in any great regard here. There is scarcely a middle class—very few, in fact, between the *propriétaire* and the negro; and naturally all whites loathe the idea of admitting blacks to a social equality. We had one touch of equality, in the waiter at the hotel sitting down to table with us.

I walked over to Dolé, a little village, about five miles from Basseterre, and the site of some thermal baths. Crossing some mountain rivers and ravines by well-constructed stone bridges, and then turning east, I gradually ascended, by an excellent road, to the high table-land above Basseterre, the Houël-Mont mountains being on the right, and the Souffrière range in front. From the stony nature of the soil, much of this high plateau is uncultivated; but on reaching St. Charles, a sugar estate, worked by a colony of

negroes from St. Kitts, matters improved. The view of the Souffrière, when the clouds allowed its peaks to reveal themselves, was extremely beautiful. The dark-green forests of the inferior mountains, which form the base, contrasted well with the red-calcined mural crown that marks the crater, which is visible only for a moment, and then wraps itself up in fleecy mystery. There is something delightful in the idea of traversing such solitary forests, and being for a time out of sight and hearing of man and of civilization.

From St. Charles, with its pretty group of cabbage-palms in the centre of the dingy negro village, the road turns south, rising gradually for a couple of miles. A few scattered huts, a little hamlet or two, a good-sized church, and you attain the height overlooking the little village of Dolé, still invisible, and far below you. The scene here is of surpassing fertility. Imagine a capacious basin, formed by high mountains wooded to their summit with trees of the richest hues; the deep bottle-green of the mango, the scarlet of the bois-mortelle, and other trees of bright yellow or beautiful lilac; while mountains of inferior height, yet still very high, seem planted half-way up with rows of mango-trees running vertically up their sides, which make them look as if they were furrowed, and give the scene a very peculiar character. The deep ravines and valleys beneath had regular groves of plantains and bananas, and of the deep-green coffee-bush. At intervals, there towered above these the graceful cabbage-palm, that giraffe of the forest; whilst down

the deep ravines leaped from boulder to boulder an angry torrent of almost-boiling water, due south. In front lay the sea, the islands Les Saintes in the mid-distance, and Dominica looming beyond; whilst, eastward, a little fragment of Maria Galante closed the prospect.

Bridges and water-courses stretched over every ravine, all admirably constructed of stone, the masonry most solid and substantial; yet our islands are utterly deficient in these structures. An inscription on one reveals the mystery of their erection:

"Sous Mr. Layrle,
Gouverneur de la
Guadeloupe et
Dépendances, la 25eme
Compie du 1re Rég.
d'Infrr de Marine.
Capitaine Beaudeduit.
1846."

This is as it should be. When not on active military or naval service, the French soldiers, instead of the abominable idleness which characterizes our services, are usefully employed in constructing roads, bridges, acqueducts, and other necessary public works; and the number of the troop, and the name of the captain superintendant is inscribed on the structure, as honourable record of their efficiency. Why should a body of men of the grade of labourers, be kept in idleness, (for the routine of parade and mounting-guard is absolutely nothing), when such indispensable labours have to be

done? In St. Vincent, where there is scarcely a bridge over a river, there are positively hired garrison labourers to do the hard work. Exposure to the sun or climate, &c., cannot fairly be urged as an excuse, because the French are as susceptible to such influences as the English, and as careful of their men; and, besides that, labour in the Tropics is not half so dangerous as idle listlessness and drinking. The result, however, is, that the French colonies have bridges and roads, where we have none.

By mistake, I passed Dolé, and had to mount up to it again. This way is the grand route and carriage-road to Point à Pitre; and the whole of this finely-graduated road was made by the military.

I got a bottle of white wine, price one franc, from a *cabaret*, the only apology for an hotel in the straggling village, and found it good wholesome wine, though the cost was less than that of a pint and a quarter bottle of ale or porter in any of our colonies. I called on M. B——, Chevalier de la Légion d'Honneur, a Privy Councillor, and the Registrar of this quarter, a very amiable kind person, my fellow-traveller by schooner from Point à Pitre. He walked with me to the thermal bath. This furious boiling torrent dashes through a deep ravine to the right of the town, but the water is far too hot to be comfortable, and is only used as a *dernier resort* by rheumatic patients, who would consent to be boiled to lobsters to get rid of their pains.

A hundred yards to the east brought us to a little

canal of tepid water conducted to a mill, which derives from the stream its motive power. Here I found several rude negro cottages, which are let to the bathing patients at ten dollars or two guineas a month, without an article of furniture in them or any attendance, and provisions must be brought from Basseterre. I should think that, as every season is alike and people come all the year round, a comfortable *Pension* here would be a good speculation; as it was, however, some of the huts were tenanted. Our miniature canal, *alias* water-trough, brought us to one of the most exquisite natural baths I ever saw. The only accommodation for bathers was an open thatched shed, without chair or table, or aught but the bare ground, for the men; and another, a little retired, for the women. By a stringent law here, all mankind are compelled to bathe in drawers. I plunged in at once up to my neck at a delightful temperature, and swam to a huge boulder of rock that rises most inconveniently in the centre of the bath, and on the other side of which the water was most palpably warmer. I approached with some caution a spot indicated and put my foot close to the springs, for these baths do not descend from the Souffrière like the baths of the ravine below, but rise *in situ*. The feeling was most luxurious. The water was the clearest I ever saw, every pebble and shell at the bottom being distinctly visible, though five feet deep; gradually getting shallower, however, as it approaches the canal. The whole length of the bath may be forty feet, but it is irregular in

width and depth, and its agreeableness is somewhat impaired by several small boulders of rock that might easily be removed. The water was, as at that time, free to all, but it was said to be the intention of the government, when settled, to build convenient bathing-houses, and to arrange and regulate these things, and, of course, to exact a trifling charge.

While I was in the water, two little boys, one white and the other coloured, were dabbling about like two frogs, quite naked, for which they got a lecture from the great man. Coming out of this delicious bath into the wet dirty soil was anything but pleasant, as there was not even a bench to sit on, and the Jack-Spaniards were more sociable than desirable. The bath swarms with innumerable small fishes, and, in the little canal, large eels were hidden beneath the weeds.

After lunching with the hospitable Mr. B——, I walked very slowly back to Basseterre, taking three hours for the five miles by a short cut. I passed down by the old road and reached home by half-past four, much gratified by my trip. The only remedy that I can suggest to force the negro to work, is an excessive poll-tax on all blacks; one so onerous as to compel him to labour or go away. Any attempt at exacting house-rent would never do; as the planters are not true to each other, and, to obtain labourers, would entice them by offers of free houses. It could never have been contemplated by the government of any country, that a labouring population should suddenly become independent, to the ruin of everything decent

and orderly. It would be as easy to reason with a mule as with a negro, as to the advantage of labour. His answer would be: "No, Massa; me eat yam, me eat plantain, me got dem, dat enough—me no work—me no want noting more."

Were the West India islands populated like European countries, the negroes would of course be compelled to labour; but the majority of the islands are not one-sixth part filled up, nor can they be for five hundred years to come. A quarter of an acre of ground will supply the wants of a negro family of five or six; of money certainly they will not have much, but they will be amply supplied with all the substantials of negro life, whilst the labour of a dozen days in the year, where they like and when they like, will procure them such superfluities as they require. Little as I like the Americans, I must confess that they are the only men to deal with negroes. They understand them, and act accordingly Before I visited the West Indies I thought differently, but now I am convinced.

On Whit-Sunday, May 27th, was celebrated the Fête de la Mère du Bon Dieu, or, in other words, the Fête of the Virgin, opened by a procession of the authorities, and all the other ceremonies incidental to the Roman Catholic church. The most amusing thing was to see the incense-bearers, with the small functionaries, who carried croziers, banners, &c., all negroes; their black woolly heads sticking out of a white surplice, looking altogether not unlike a gru-gru-worm. Branches of palm, the tropical tree of liberty,

adorned with small tri-colour flags, formed part of the pageant. Religion in Guadaloupe is chiefly supported by the women; very few of the white men care about or believe in it. The young men go to church to laugh at the forms, and say that the priests are only worthy of a rope for propagating such mummeries. The negroes, male and female, though having no real sense of religion, are exceedingly superstitious and quite crowd the churches. But I ought to mention that the Guadaloupe ladies are very devout, and show it practically by numberless acts of kindness and benevolence. There are many Béguin nuns here, a form of devotion so practically useful as to commend itself to all.

I paid a visit to Mr. G——, one of the high officials. Until then I had no idea of the wretched state of the colony through revolution—there is literally no specie in it. The official salaries (all numerically reduced one half), are paid in assignats or conventional government notes, not worth one rap elsewhere—not even in Martinique, the sister French island. Revolution, therefore, formed as a matter of course one of the most prominent topics of our conversation, and was treated most sensibly by M. G——. The utter Utopianism of the sort of liberty required by the populace—licentiousness, Communism and Socialism—is too apparent to be dwelt upon. In fact, the whole community is upset, that a dozen men of indifferent character may obtain notoriety and ease.

To give an idea of the state of morals here among

the coloured races, I may mention that my mulatto landlady, Mademoiselle E——, descanting on the ingratitude of mankind in general and of Monsieur —— in particular, said: "I gave up my beauty, I dispensed with the etiquette (a mild term for the marriage ceremony), *et voilà la conséquence.*"

As may be supposed in the state of things that existed on my arrival, society was quite broken up. There were no balls, no *soirées* or festivities of any sort; the people were too poor to think of such matters, and too unsettled in their anticipations of the future. All the educated classes seemed assured that Republicanism cannot stand; that France must, in a short time, be either a monarchy or an empire. Most were inclined to believe the latter, as, say they: "France is an ambitious nation and loves *la gloire.*" All concurred in admiring the position of England through all these political eruptions: "You English," said a French gentleman to me, "have attained your liberties through moral instead of physical force—*c'est admirable, votre position.*"

So much had been said of the superior civilization of the French West India islands over the British, that I was curious to see the difference, and to trace its cause. The houses, both in town and country, are much on a par, taking into consideration, of course, the slight difference between English neatness and French show and the domestic usages of the two countries; but, in the inhabitants, there is a great difference, mostly, I regret to say, in favour of the French, who are all

amenity of manner, full of the *bienséance* of humanity, and pleasingly different from the cold coarse vulgarity which but too often characterizes the English out here. This arises from the difference of rank and education in the two parties; the *propriétaires* being generally men of good families who have received their education at some French university, and their patrimonies from their great grandfathers; whilst, among the English, the true tropical squire is absolutely extinct and his place is usurped by some thriving tradesman, a vulgar fellow, who, battening on the liberal expenditure of his *ci-devant* customer, has mortgaged himself into possession; and then, with his hat on one side and his arms akimbo, set up for a planter. This dignity he shares with Scotch ploughmen, who come out of some sheiling in the Highlands and have skinned every flint, until they have bought the estate of their former master over his head.

With the shopkeepers it is somewhat different. The French shopkeeper adopts some tropical city as his home, and he at once marries and settles himself down as a stone of the soil, intending his creole family to be his successors; whilst the English shopkeeper, on the contrary, a tradesman in origin, feelings and habits, comes out here to get as much as he can and then return home an independant man. The result of all this is, that the Frenchman seeks to improve all around him, to supply as he best may pleasures which in Europe had become habits; and hence the theatres, the *cafés*, the billiard tables, &c., that are met with in the

French islands. The Englishman does as little as possible for his island, careless as to what becomes of it the moment after his departure, his only ties being half a dozen illegitimate children for whom he does little, and cares less.

The roads and bridges in Guadaloupe being made by the military, under competent engineers, are generally excellent, and the streets are lighted at night—not very brilliantly certainly, but still lighted, which our towns are not. The French streets also are cleaned by convicts, and very effectually too, whilst, owing to a more stringent police, less affected by a maudlin philanthropy, the negroes are not so drunken, uproarious and insolent as ours are. There can be no doubt that, in all communities where negroes predominate, a stern military police is the only effective one. When the black is liable to be marched off between two soldiers armed with muskets, he is extremely cautious how he misbehaves.

In cookery, the French West Indians are certainly in advance of our colonists. Instead of being choked, as with us, with hard yams, pigeon pea-soup, and putrid salt fish, or being compelled to eat Irish mess-beef, closely allied to salt-junk, salt hams, salter tongues, and waxy potatoes—here, in Guadaloupe, we have good soups, omelettes, fresh fish well dressed, fresh meat; a variety of vegetables, such as carrots, spinach, lentil-beans, cabbage, green peas, and salads, with something or other every day in the shape of dessert—mangoes, bananas, or strawberries; fresh butter and cream-cheese,

the key-hole, previous to entering a room, is also another incorrigible trick among negroes, as they are exceedingly inquisitive; and being barefooted, you can seldom hear them beforehand; so, they pass in upon you without any warning. To myself, whilst writing or painting, intent on what I am doing, it was extremely disagreeable to look up by chance, and find one with his eyes fixed intently upon me, watching every gesture. To prevent this, I was obliged at last to lock my door, and cover the key-hole.

The last batch of native Africans, liberated from a slaver, and brought to St. Vincent, when told what they were to do, (*i. e.* to labour in the fields as apprentices for one year, the price of their liberation), drew their hands across their throats, to signify, as an old Eboe woman interpreted it, that "Dem cut dere troat fus;" yet each of these fellows had cost the government £40. The first benefit they conferred upon the island was to introduce the small-pox, which killed more creole negroes than the new-comers replaced.

One of the most obnoxious sights in the West Indies, is to see a white female (of the lower class, of course) *en jupe,* with a Madras handkerchief round her head. She looks exactly like a patient just discharged, half-cured, from an hospital Some of the old white men, also, especially in the French islands, wear a handkerchief bound round the head, under the hat, *à la peon,* and look equally repulsive.

Guadaloupe is full of the mimosa bush, a very disagreeable plant, perfectly useless, and bristling with

white straight thorns, half an inch in length, tearing one's clothes and umbrella.

My negro lad, Blaise, insisted on wearing his hat at dinner-time, whilst waiting at table; and no persuasion of his mistress could induce him to doff it. To knock it off would never have done, as such an act at that time might have been returned with a knife between our ribs, or have caused a massacre of the whites. Blaise was a good-hearted lad, but as stupid as an idiot, very idle, and exceedingly mischievous. The negro idea of liberty, is to be maintained as a matter of right, but to do nothing in return. It is in vain to reason with negroes, for they have not brains to understand. The doggedness and stupidity of an African, are quite beyond the conception of all who have not been amongst them.

The moral earthquake of revolution has been much worse in Guadaloupe than the physical one; for it has brought to the ground all that was most estimable, and left the hideous lower class, not only standing, but thriving on the ruin of the others. The negro sings, dances, laughs and claps his hands; for come what will, he has an independence which the white can never acquire, until, indeed, the European can assimilate with the barbarians around him. This is a terrible picture, but a true one. With a white peasantry, however ignorant, the educated and refined can have some sympathy; but with the negro, so repulsive in every respect, so mentally obtuse, and boiling with furious and fiendish passions, it is impossible. Equality,

fraternity, absurd as such terms are even in the most refined countries, here, with negroes, are worse than ludicrous. What then is left for the white? Either to reduce these people to their proper station, and force them to labour for the general good, or abandon the islands! The first is, from their numerical superiority, impossible: sooner or later, the last will be the fatal result.

The low and receding forehead, the vast preponderance of the animal over the intellectual organs, with the enormous thickness of the skull of the negro, and the consequently smaller quantity of brain, are all decided marks of an inferior organization, amply borne out by the immense number of idiots, compared with those existing among a white community; and this peculiarity is quite as evident in the French as in the British islands.

I once had the curiosity to ask, if ever the negroes got their hair cut; but the question seemed to give some offence, and I did not get a satisfactory answer. The negro speaks in sputters, so great is his excitement, and this always gives him the appearance of being in a rage. Coloured people, even to the *quasi* white, retain this peculiarity, which makes the females seem furies. It is absurd to talk of climate as the cause of this: it is race. The same elongation of cranium, which I noticed in the Turks at Constantinople, is also the characteristic of the negroes, and rather laughably bears out the sailors' epithet of "Cocoa-nut," applied to them. Phrenologically speaking, it implies

the organ of superstition rather than of veneration; and negroes are horribly superstitious, though they do not venerate anything.

Generally speaking, I know of nothing more mischievous than theory. Abstract principles can only govern Utopia; and it is this ultra-philosophy that has upset the world. We must take human nature as we find it, with all its weaknesses and imperfections, and legislate for the man as he is and will be. Elevate him as far as we can, certainly, but do not cut the strings, and let him fly, as we have begun to do.

The government of England, Scotland, and Wales, is easy; Ireland requires a more coercive administration; but the colonies, where we have different races to deal with, different in religion, in feeling, and in character, can only, in the first instance, be brought into discipline by a military force; not under a military man, but at the disposal of a wise and philosophical chief.

In the West Indies, the small-pox is a very serious visitation, as the various uninfected islands put themselves into strict quarantine, to the great hindrance of commerce and annoyance of travellers. The French are very lax in reference to this disease, and I was continually accosted in the street by negroes having a full crop of white pustules—for so does it shew itself on blacks. I have even seen infected negro boatmen jump into the sea up to their knees to launch or beach their boats, their legs covered with the misletoe-looking *variole*. It is from this carelessness that so many negroes die of it, besides spreading the disease in all

directions. It must be understood that the Basseterre boatmen launch their canoes from the beach through the break of the sea—a disagreeable enough operation for the passengers. One man rows and a second astern uses a paddle, both to steer by and to row alternately; a horribly bungling contrivance, but as the boats have to be beached stern foremost, a rudder would be in the way. The Guadaloupe canoe is properly a corriole or dug-out, raised up very sharp fore and aft, and slightly curved; ticklish things to look at, but I believe that accidents rarely or never occur.

Negro sailors are a wretchedly bungling set, from the same want of discernment that characterises the whole race. When the anchor of a sloop or golette is at her bows, and the current has began to act upon her, then the mainsail will be set, and after she has got half a mile to leeward—no joke in the West Indies—her head sails will be run up. By this time, the current has carried her so far astern that she has a dead beat to make, where good seamanship would have given her a slant under the land, and ultimately have saved her eight or ten miles in her voyage of forty-five miles from Basseterre to Point à Pitre. I have watched this lubberly operation nightly for a month together.

"Guadaloupe," says Osborne's 'Guide,' "is celebrated for the beauty of its women." Basseterre certainly is not; for I scarcely saw a tolerable white female face in it. The coloured females have rather less of the negro features than in our colonies; but the utter want of all softness of expression in the mulatto

countenance, is fatal to anything like beauty. I have observed that in the American mulattoes, and also in the French, the paternal features have predominated; with ours, the maternal have the ascendancy.

There is something very savage and lowering as of a man who knew not pity, in the eye of a French soldier, that to me is always very repulsive. You rarely see an open countenance in the French ranks. There is also a superciliousness of manner in the officers, that shows they were never born to command. French seamen, however, are stout, healthy young fellows, in a condition that speaks well for their commissariat.

Small-pox and revolution produced a most baneful effect in Guadaloupe. No American ships touch at the island; first, because it will quarantine them at the other islands; and next, because no one will take French *assignats*. Jonathan is too knowing: he has no faith even in British West India bills of exchange, much less in French paper-money. He must have hard dollars, and as the people here have not any to give, he will not come near them.

There is no doubt that since the abolition of slavery, the French West India islands have become very disagreeable places to live in, and are not free from danger to the whites. The negroes play all manner of antics in the street of Basseterre, and laugh, shout, and jostle one in passing, showing by a thousand signs that they consider the place as their own, and view the whites as intruders.

Voltaire said that Frenchmen were either monkeys

or tigers; but what would he have said could he but have seen the coloured population of the West Indies? There is a horrible proportion of the monkey in all the coloured tribes, shewing throughout every variation, the fundamental inferiority of the blacks, since their incapacity to reflect is never overcome.

I know of nothing more unpleasant than to be in a country where the half-savage, wholly ignorant populace consider themselves your superiors—at least, as your masters; yet, from the manners of the negroes in Guadaloupe, there is no doubt that such is their feeling, and they certainly act upon it. This is considered to be the most *douce* population in the West Indies. What must the others be?

I do think that an Englishman of any reflection is very unfitted to reside in any other part of the world than his own country. To pass through different countries, domiciled in hotels, going to balls and theatres at night, and seeing the lions in the day-time, is all very well; but to live amongst and associate with the people is another matter. The Frenchman is too *tête monté*; the German of education is too mystical, until "Kant" predominates; the Italians are ignorant and vulgar; the Americans are, as well as being ignorant, and vulgar, ludicrously conceited, and for the rest far below the standard in knowledge and education.

The negro *citoyens* began to make demonstrations in June, and renewed them every night, keeping the whites in constant dread. They sang seditious songs—"*Mourir pour la patrie,*" &c., and tried to

unhorse the mounted *Gendarmerie,* in which, however, they did not succeed. Still, such signs were ominous, and I thought it time to beat a retreat. The approaching elections for the end of June were looked forward to with apprehension, Bisette, the negro demagogue, a mulatto, was at Basseterre, and was followed through the streets with "Vivats."

CHAPTER IX.

DEPARTURE FROM GUADALOUPE—BEAUTIFUL SCENERY—DOMINICA—PRINCE ALBERT'S FANCY—ROSEAU—MORNE BRUCE—MONETARY SYSTEM—SCOTT'S HEAD—NEGRO RIOT—IMPOSITIONS—PORTUGUESE IMMIGRANTS—THE MOUNTAIN LAKE—LES TROIS PITONS.

I LEFT Basseterre on June the 13th, in a boat of nine tons for Dominica, eager to get back to an English colony. The captain of the boat was one of the best-visaged negroes I ever saw, and spoke tolerable English:—"Me no know, Sar; me Frenchman. Me hab wife, children—*beau garçons, jolie filles;* but me no like look of tings. After elections, I fear werry bad tings, slaves werry idle, dem no like vorke; dem tief, dem beg, dem no like do noting. De fiddle hab *four ropes*, dem not go togedder (not in unison); dat werry bad Sar for true. Me fear bad will come,"—and he shook his head ominously. Now, there can be no doubt that this man's fears were founded, as a negro, on a knowledge of negro feelings, and perhaps intentions

unknown to the whites; and I felt glad to be so far out of the embroglio.

Daybreak found us running down along the Dominica land, a succession of exquisite mountains, some of the highest being five thousand feet. The spurs of the lower or green range run down to the sea, forming a continuity of romantic headlands, traversed by deep ravines. All were covered with bright green bush, but looked as lonely and as desolate as if man had no dominion over the earth. Here and there, on the sea-shore, I could discern a dark grey negro hut or two, but for the rest—"Ichabod, thy glory hath departed." Such is the once flourishing Dominica—a deserted Paradise! *Vede Napoli e poi mori!* See Dominica!

I reached Roseau, the capital, by one P.M. The negro boatmen demanded three dollars for putting me on shore, and I was obliged to give them half-a-crown.

The small-pox in Guadaloupe was described to me by a French doctor as of a very mild kind, such as with common care would not be fatal to anybody; but I saw a negro child of four years of age, stark naked, and covered with the pustules of the veriole, running about the street in Basseterre. I observed also that a negro lad, one of our crew, about eighteen years of age, had several pustules on him, which increased in number during the night. This was by no means a pleasant companion on board a boat of nine tons, he handling everything, and we *perforce* brushing continually against him. At Dominica there was no quarantine, as some months before there had been two or three

cases in the island. Happily the disease was now all but extinct. I took care when on shore not to proclaim the presence of our infected man on board.

I went to Prince Albert's Fancy, kept by Rebecca Bridgewater, a coloured woman. West Indian hotels are horribly comfortless places, and this was no exception. The charges are a dollar and a half per day, six shillings and three pence, a large sum now in the West Indies, especially considering what one gets for their money. The fact is that none of these places were built for hotels, and are therefore not adapted for such purposes, but would do very well for a creole family. Generally there is one spacious apartment called the hall, where every one assembles, and there each rabbit had its individual burrow, only large enough to sleep in; and as even the most fastidious creole lady never cared about the presence of slaves, a carelessness of privacy has been generated, that is exceedingly embarrassing to Europeans.

Roseau is beautifully situated on the sea-shore, and is backed by mountains. Excepting a small space around the market-place, the houses seem built on a green meadow, so thoroughly has the grass overgrown the slippery stones of the streets. The walking is wretched—almost as bad as at Basseterre. Some of the houses are tolerably good; but Creole dwellings (small wooden unpainted houses, inhabited by coloured people) predominate. Each has a wooden portico over the entrance, the only architectural peculiarity of

Roseau. The impress of extreme poverty is on everything in the place. The negroes are as saucy, noisy and independent, as elsewhere; in fact, they are the only independent class now in the West Indies. How lamentable, that the mistaken policy of well-meaning, but weak people, should have caused all this desolation! "We have houses and lands," said a lady to me, "but they are worthless now." When will the reign of pious humbug end?

On the north, the town is bounded by a rather wide, shallow river, the Roseau, not navigable except by wash-women. Following this for a quarter of a mile, I came upon one of the loveliest scenes in nature; a succession of gigantic wooded mounds, five or six hundred feet high, which seemed to have been riven by some tremendous convulsion of nature from the immense volcanic mountains which overtop them in all directions. These mounds surrounded a bottom, covered with cane-pieces, interspersed with cabbage and cocoa-nut palms. Around this plain rushed the rock-imbedded river, bounded in its course by light-coloured cliffs, sixty feet in height. Unfortunately, the view is so extensive, that to attempt a sketch of the whole, even in outline, requires a good deal of moral courage in the tropics; so hot is the sun, and so impertinent are the negroes in their remarks.

However gratifying to the eye, West India scenery is seldom enjoyable, so offended are the other senses. Nor does the eye quite escape, but passes at a glance

from the sublime to the ridiculous. I scarcely wonder that creoles are so matter-of-fact, so thoroughly is sentiment destroyed here.

I walked up to the garrison at Morne Bruce, situated on the spur of a mountain four hundred and fifty feet above the sea: the view from this up the Roseau valley is most exquisite; Europe can show nothing like it.—

> "Rocks, craigs, and knolls confusedly hurled
> The fragments of an earlier world."

But Scott's Trosachs were mere pebbles to what we have here. These knolls are mountains in themselves, topped by volcanic cones, whose dusky green sides shoot up in dim loftiness. The lower mountains are covered with the most picturesque trees I ever saw. "It is generally necessary to improve nature," say the painters: here nature will return the compliment, and improve the painters, so absolutely perfect is it!

Negroes are everywhere the same, which implies that they are not better in Dominica than in Guadaloupe. Of the two, perhaps, they are more idle and greater rogues in the former island, but not quite so sanguinary; not from any want of prompting, however, as there are plenty of the *mauvais sujets* here from the French islands on either flank; fellows who flock here as to a *refugium peccatorum*, when Martinique or its sister isle get too hot to hold them.

I had my hair cut by a negro, and he whistled all the time of the operation.

"What am I to pay?" I inquired.

"Half a dollar, Sar."

"Half a shilling, you mean," (the regular price all through the West Indies).

"Half a dollar's Dominica price, but I'll take a shilling."

And thus it goes on. The negro would rather cut hair once a day for half a dollar, than cut it four times for a dollar. Once a day, keeps him idle for eleven hours and a half out of the twelve, whilst four times, for double the sum, fatigues him too much; and on this principle everything is done. Extortion and swindling are practised in all directions—anything but labour. Our boy carried a little box for me three-quarters of a mile from the tavern, at nine o'clock in the morning, at which time I dismissed him, to go home; he got back to the house at three o'clock in the afternoon; yet this lad of fourteen expected to be paid his wages all the same. When reprimanded by his mistress, he could make no excuse for his neglect.

This sort of thing, varied in time and manner, goes on every day. The stolidness of a negro countenance, after committing any fault, surpasses European conception, and they generally turn away from any reproof grinning. They literally have neither shame nor compunction; and no white or coloured person dare punish them; yet it is astonishing how they do knock about each other, or any one under themselves.

I have travelled much, but I never have been before in a place where strangers were so imposed upon as at

Roseau, in Dominica. It is one of the poorest spots, perhaps, on the face of the globe; yet the prices demanded for everything are positively preposterous. The accommodation is of the meanest sort, yet, such as it is, can only be had at a greater price than is asked for the best lodgings in all the other islands. There is nothing like a decent hotel in the place—only a sort of half tavern, half boarding-house, generally kept by coloured women, who, for every species of discomfort, demand an extortionate price. They are poor—and Dominica is a poor place, say they; so they fall upon a stranger tooth and nail, and strangle him, much as a cat strangles a mouse.

To begin with small things, three-pence sterling was demanded by my landlady for a box of lucifer matches, which cost in every other colony a penny. Articles that cost two dollars elsewhere in the colonies, are charged three in Roseau; and so they go on. This is only to strangers. The inhabitants know better, and would tear each other to pieces for the value of a farthing: in fact, such voracious sharks I have never seen before. All military men will bear testimony to this, for they are plundered most remorselessly.

Although considered by the inhabitants extremely healthy during my sojourn, there being at the time no epidemic, Dominica is generally as unhealthy as St. Lucia. There are three Souffrières on the island, in a state of latent activity, the exhalations from which are extremely disagreeable, as well as unwholesome:

the sulphurous smell from the nearest, about six miles off, pervades the town, turning gold and silver black: it is sulphuretted hydrogen gas. The air is extremely heavy, and I got prostrated in a few days. I tried the total abstinence system; and sunk under it so rapidly, that I was obliged to revert to Barclay and Perkins, which revived me. In hot climates, repeated draughts of cold water weaken the stomach, and impede perspiration, instead of promoting it; hence tee-totalism cannot be practised here. Still the drunkenness of the British negroes is something astounding, though I did not notice so much in Dominica (half French), as in St. Vincent, Barbadoes, and Trinidad.

The vegetable market of Roseau is extremely well stocked with yams, eddoes, tanniers, polenta, farine, and manyoe; and amongst the fruits are figs; but the meat market is wretched. Fish is sufficiently abundant, and, I believe, cheap enough to the natives.

Towards the end of June I got away from Prince Albert's Fancy to a dilapidated room in a dilapidated but very respectable house. My new landlady was one of the many to be found in every West India island now-a-days — people who exist only, merely vegetate. Her house and grounds are her own property: she contrives to eke out a subsistence by letting what were formerly the quarters of her slaves to negro families. From want of capital, everything is going to ruin and decay. For fifty dollars she might have fitted up two rooms in her house, which

would bring her in ten dollars a month, besides extras for attendance, &c., yet fifty dollars was beyond her power to obtain!

The monetary system of Dominica is positively disgraceful to the Home government. It is the most complicated and un-English of all the British West India islands, affording to the inhabitants an impunity in swindling, which they do not fail to avail themselves of. What are we English to make of, one dog, five dogs, ten dogs; one noir or one samatier, six of which make fourpence, a prœdial, a mocho, fivepence three farthings. A half cut dollar is one shilling and ninepence halfpenny. Except with Spanish or South American dollars, which are, and must, for purposes of trade with the adjacent nations, be made legal tenders, the rest ought to be, throughout our colonies, British money. American half dollars even are a very base coin. As far as British money goes, whatever the natives of British Colonies may choose to call it, we English people know its exact value, and are protected accordingly; but when we have put forth their imaginary coins, having no assignable value at all, except what they, still British subjects, choose to put upon them, then they become a gross abuse, and from such an abuse we have a right to be protected. The Dominica negroes in the market, refuse to take pence or halfpence. Ought such a thing as that to be allowed? The remedy is easy: legalize no foreign coin in our colonies but Spanish or South American dollars; prohibit all others, and then everything will

be simple enough. If they choose to take foreign coin let it be at their own discount; but not at a premium, to the disparagement of British coin, as is the case at Trinidad with French money, and where I have taken a Calcutta rupee, worth two shillings of standard mint silver, for a quarter dollar, or one shilling and a halfpenny. This, in the face of it, is a gross absurdity.

Roseau has an excellent news-room, where the principal newspapers and all the first-class periodicals are taken in, and attached, is the nucleus of a library. The advantage of such an institution in a West India island can never be properly appreciated in England. In the West India colonies there is an absolute dearth of public amusements; and were it not for a news-room, the mind would stagnate, or quickly retrograde. Odd as it may seem at home, the three connecting links out here with the civilized world, are our Episcopal Church, the arrival of the steamers, and the reading-room. Of society, as a privileged body, there is none; and the only chance of meeting with intelligent, decently-educated men is amongst the military, the clergy, a civilian physician or two, and a few (but not many), official men, as most of the latter are either thoroughly debased by libertinism, or steeped in debt to a degree that forces them to be swindlers. The Governor of Dominica, during my sojourn, Colonel Macdonald, was, for a wonder, most respectable, both in public and private life.

I went with Dr. Austen, the staff physician, to

inspect the invalid station at Scott's Head, eight miles distant. Our corrial, for it was nothing more, was a large one, had a wooden awning, and was manned by four negro rowers, guided by a sable Palinurus. The row of two hours and a half was a most charming one. We kept within twenty yards of the beach all the way, as the flaws that come down with extreme violence from the mountain valleys, are very much dreaded in a boat without a keel, which would upset in a moment. Our crew, the best of their kind, were a wretched set. Some of them rowed with closed eyes; and all were too lazy to lift the oar after they had feathered it, and so caught the water as a matter of course, and impeded progress. The plain fact is, that negroes are too lazy to do anything properly, and as many of them dance and drink all night, they are, as a consequence, totally incapable of doing their work in the day time.

Our route lay along the coast at the base of ranges of lovely green mountains, feathered with bush to their summits. We passed Point Michelle, a little negro village, with a catholic church, where a nasty surf rolls obliquely up a coarse shingly beach. The situation was exquisitely picturesque. The rude African huts, enshrined in groves of mango and cocoa trees; the tiny whitewashed church, with its bold iron cross; the unpainted, weather-stained stores of the tradesmen or magnates; the rude fishing corrials either drawn up on the beach, or lazily floating in and out in the very break of the sea; the rocks and green precipices

behind formed altogether a scene never to be forgotten. Then came Point Guignard, where some remarkably ugly rocks lift their black points above the angry surge, which swells to cover them and then angrily recedes. Between these breakers we took our way, rather to my alarm; but the negro is somewhat great at a close shave. We then opened the magnificent valley of the Souffrière, a splendid volcanic bowl, formed by mountains two thousand feet high. But description, without the aid of the pencil, would fail to give an idea of this scene.

On the shore, we have a shingly beach, lashed by a gentle surge, and behind, the white boiling houses and offices of the Souffrière estate, the late owner of which, Captain Forman, of the merchant service, was drowned on his passage home to bring out his family, after holding the estate four months. Gently sloping above the estate is a true African village of bee-hive huts, all but smothered in a grove of cocoa-trees, and from this rise plateau after plateau of provision grounds, in ridges of careful culture. Above are seen the sulphur-patches of the Souffrière, looking in the distance like chalk-pits; and from behind rush up immense pyramids of green mountains, flanked on either side by bold volcanic cones of tufa, their western surfaces bare, the rest as green as tropical vegetation can make them. It was an awful, and yet a lovely picture.

Scott's Head is a rocky promontory, three hundred feet high, connected with the main island by a long, shingly beach fifty yards in breadth. On the southern,

or windward side, beats the furious surf; the northern side opens on an exquisitely tranquil bay, whence all the western coast of Dominica is visible. To the northward, in clear weather, Guadaloupe may be seen. South-east, to windward, Martinique, distant forty-three miles, is almost always discernable. On Scott's Head there is a fort, with excellent officers' quarters, and a barrack for the men, two of whom are stationed merely as signal-men, to report vessels from the southward.

On our return from this trip, the flurries of wind from the mountains, with the regular trade-wind, sent us briskly home, highly gratified with what we had seen.

In the West Indies, preserved meats are failures. At the North Pole it may be otherwise; but here, the boiling climate thaws and resolves potted hare, beef, harricot-mutton, &c., into a rather oddly-tasting soup. Oysters and pickled salmon keep the best, perhaps, of any of the preserves, though even oysters are terribly liquified. In fact, these things all spoil. Yarmouth bloaters, and anchovy-paste do keep pretty well. In Roseau, wine and spirits are dear, and abominably adulterated.

While in Dominica, I heard of a terrible disturbance at Point à Pitre, Guadaloupe: a number of negroes were killed by the troops. At Maria Galante, that peaceable spot, five thousand negroes from the country burnt several estates, butchering the whites, and committing all sorts of atrocities. The military were called

out and sixty negroes shot in the *mêlée*, when order was once more restored. Several of the worst of the insurrectionists fled, and landed in Dominica, of which the Governor of Guadaloupe, by despatches, advised our governor.

West Indian towns are, generally speaking, barbarous places. In Roseau there is but one street, with its name written up, Market Street, in a wretchedly cramped hand; the rest are absolutely nameless. Not more than two or three shops have the names of their owners written over them. Even the Colonial Bank makes "no sign," and a stranger may wander up and down, and pass the very place he wants half a dozen times without being able to find it out. To ask a negro a question as to any place, even five yards distant, would be an absurd betrayal of stupidity, as they could not be made to understand what you required. Possibly a coloured man or woman, if particularly amiable, might answer you; but in Dominica, even coloured people are comparatively rare, whilst whites are few and far between.

The reason given for the shops not having the owners' names written up is rather a curious one. All the shopkeepers wish to be considered merchants, their shops are stores and their shop-boys clerks: so that they consider it *infra dig.* to write up their names, lest it should be inferred that they were retail shopkeepers, who would, as they do, sell you a yard of tape or a dozen shirt buttons. This is extremely embarrassing to strangers, and gives them an infinity of trouble.

Who can describe to you any particular shop that you want at a house without a number, in a street without a name, and no owner's name written up or any external sign to distinguish whether it be an apothecary's or a linen-draper's. Messrs. Brown Brothers and Messrs. Stedman and McSwinnie, in Dominica, form the sensible exceptions to this practice. A tradesman cannot be too explicit on these points, and, for myself, I should always prefer dealing with that man who openly avowed what he was, than with one who, bolster himself up as he may, can never, from want of education, be mistaken for anything but what he is—a shopkeeper, and nothing more.

The West India islands are full of the swindles of European tradesmen. Wine and spirits are shockingly adulterated; imitations of every well-known article are vended as the genuine, and these fraudulent imitations are sold at prices that would afford an ample profit for the genuine commodity. I never saw such concentrated cheating before, yet the principal shopkeepers of Roseau—are *Honourables!*

I went to Mr. H——, a house fifteen hundred and sixty feet above the level of the sea, and where any European could live in as fine a climate as that of Italy. There are tens of thousands of acres of unappropriated mountain lands in Dominica, where European vegetables will grow admirably, and which, were they populated by English emigrants, hold out far greater inducements than the United States or Canada, whilst, to the island itself, the advantage would be

incalculable, as introducing a white peasantry to supersede the negro. In Mr. H——'s employ (Eggleston), are some Madeirian Portuguese who enjoy the rudest health, are honest, industrious and civil, and who say that the climate up here is not at all warmer than Madeira. It must not be overlooked that, by bringing the negro four thousand miles and planting him as a free man in these exquisite islands, we have retarded civilization for many years instead of advancing it. As for yellow fever, no one here ever dreams of such a thing. In all the islands, particular localities are unhealthy; that part of Dominica called Prince Rupert's, for example: but then there is an undrainable swamp close to the village of Portsmouth, which generates a miasma that would kill the inhabitants of any country, but I believe it to be the *only* unhealthy spot in the island.

Hitherto the West Indies have been either a *terra incognita* or totally misrepresented, first by wild hard-drinking military men, next by sailors, who committed all sorts of excesses and so got fevers, and thirdly by tradesmen and merchants, in order to keep up the monopoly of their trades by frightening the people at home. But steam is rapidly correcting these erroneous ideas, and for one traveller twenty years ago, thousands flock thither, even now, to be enchanted and disabused.

There was a slight shock of an earthquake on the 20th July, at one P.M. The motion resembled that of a railroad train when it slackens speed on approaching a station; the same undulating movement and the creaking of the joists. I was sitting alone with a lady,

who merely laughed. Still, a sensation of undefined dread does steal over one, and, though I laughed myself, I felt that under current which sobers one for some time. For many months previous to my arrival, Dominica had daily, nay, sometimes hourly, shocks; but their had been an interval of quietness, which this shock interrupted.

The grand "lion" of Dominica is a lake on the top of a mountain, at the extremity of the Roseau valley, and about eight miles from the city. I set off at eleven A.M. on the 2nd of August with Mr. L——, of the Customs, to visit this spot; and a most delightful journey it was.

On quitting Roseau, and crossing the brawling shallow river of the same name, a ride of two miles brought us to a point where a magnificent view broke upon our sight. We were under splendid mounds eight hundred feet in height, on the left side of a valley, from a quarter to half a mile broad, and winding irregularly through which, rushed the shallow mountain river Roseau, passable at all points, knee deep. In front, looking up the valley, and three miles off, were two cascades, leading from their rocky beds down the mountain's side. Above, rose volcanic peaks, green to their topmost height save where some streak of red showed an almost vertical landslip. Most of these were six thousand feet in height, whilst under them, were inferior heights, mountains still, the tops of which were crowned with sugar estates, each little point sustaining some eyrie-placed negro hut. But who

could describe with a pen the tints of the evergreen foliage or the varied lights and shadows, as they flickered across each rock, and dell, and promontory? In the very centre of this valley, and on a mound two hundred feet above its level, rose a house (Shawford) beautiful in itself, and commanding on all sides exquisite views, besides being a *point d'appui* for all the neighbouring country.

A little beyond Shawford we commenced the ascent of the mountain of the lake, for it has no other name. This we scaled by a very fair road, which, in fact, is the high road across the island to Rosalie. Here our view was bounded by the dense foliage of a tropical mountain forest, in which the bamboo, the trumpet-tree, and the arborescent fern predominated. As we ascended, the road contracted, whilst a peep to the left, down a deep valley, showed us that we were mounting a steep ridge between two valleys, with their circumjacent mountains, beyond which we came to the Calumet, a spring of fine water, the usual refreshing place of way-worn travellers, and grateful alike to us and to our steeds. A negro lad on foot brought up on his head a basket containing our creature-comforts, so indispensable where there are no inns or other houses at which to obtain refreshment. Here we were far away from all plantations, and even from negro huts.

From the spring the road trended north-east, yet to attain the crest of the mountain we had yet to ascend two thousand feet. Once or twice only did a few

trees, recently cut down, afford us a glimpse of the south; but that glimpse was of one of the finest volcanic cones I ever saw. But such is the apathy of the creole and the negro, that neither would of himself take the trouble to direct the clearing of a few worthless trees, even were it to open a view into Paradise itself—sugar, not scenery, being the engrossing object of their thoughts.

At last we arrived at the apex of the road, the tops of the deeply-wooded green mountains being still two thousand feet above us; and from this, a descent of a mile brought us to the lake, full four thousand feet above the sea. Of itself the lake is nothing beyond a patch of water, surrounded by sedgy and other lacustrine plants. There is nothing of the deep, solemn mountain tarns of Lochnagar or Snowdon; no rocks or precipices, but a mere pool on a mountain. Here we bivouacked, whilst a quarter of a mile beyond, a turn of the road opened to us a glimpse of the country towards Rosalie, on the windward coast, far below us. The cool temperature was most English, and therefore agreeable, though not to our woolly attendant, who exclaimed: "Me no top here, Sar: it cold too much;" and go he would, which, I think, no English servant would have ventured to do. We stayed by the lake's brink for an hour, and then came down again, arriving at Roseau at seven P.M., just as a brilliant moon overtopped the bold promontory of Morne Bruce.

A few days afterwards I rode with Mr. L—— to

the cascades of Les Trois Pitons, a cratiform mountain up the Roseau valley, and about four miles from town. Leaving Shawford, with its splendid group of mountain cabbages, to the left, we plunged down a rocky road into the bottom of the valley; and at the small estate of Trafalgar left our horses, and procured a young negro for our guide. During our ride, we had had several heavy showers, for September is the rainy season, and amongst these lofty mountains the rains are almost incessant. This made our path amongst the tall grass very wet.

On topping a slight ascent behind the house, we obtained a glimpse of the two cascades, about a mile and a half distant, though looking much nearer. Our path was now a mere gutter, intersected every few yards by tiny streams, so that we soon had soaked boots; and I know few things more unpleasant than the certainty of being in wet boots for four or five hours, without any change. The track was otherwise disagreeable, as we were pent up between high mountains, and the valley became a mere ravine, the precipitous sides of which blocked out every breath of air. After stumbling and "squashing" along for three quarters of a mile, I fairly gave up, and was fain to lie down on the road-side, but was somewhat rudely revived by a pelting shower, and quite brought round by that circulating medium, brandy and water.

Here we were close to the Roseau river, and every moment the roar of the fall became louder, though it was itself invisible. A little further on, we turned

sharply to the left and clambered the huge rocks of a water course, each boulder having its pool two or three feet deep. This was weary work, for hands as well as feet were obliged to be brought into requisition to keep a footing in such a ticklish place. A hundred yards of rough climbing brought us out on a spot whence we could obtain a full view of the romantic fall, tumbling leaping and roaring from a deep chasm, in one narrow but unbroken sheet of foam, down a descent of one hundred and fifty feet to the recipient basin still fifty feet above us. To this I did not ascend, as I had a far better view where I was; but my companion mounted up, and was, as I suspected he would be, too immediately beneath the fall to be able to observe its grandeur.

The base of any cascade is ever romantic: the roar, the rockets of foam, the thousand and one little streamlets that feed it, the gush out of every possible cranny, the huge blocks of rock—all combine to give it interest and beauty. But as sitting wet and shivering on a bare rock in a cool corner of the world is rather an unpleasant situation, my curiosity was soon satisfied, and I commenced a retrograde movement which led to my stumbling off a slippery rock into a ditch. This soaked me through, and I got back to Trafalgar thoroughly bedraggled with mud and dirt. But a tub of water, washing out, wringing and putting on the still wet socks into the saturated boots, was an approximation to comfort, and some Australian ale

rendered us tolerably resigned. A ride home in the cool of the evening, with the comforts of a real ablution and really dry clothes at the end of our journey set us *en règle*, and we then wound up the evening at a friend's. On my return to my lodgings at night, the moon gleamed brightly on Les Trois Pitons, a mountain six thousand feet high, green to its rounded top. From below, it has every appearance of having been a crater; it is, therefore, a bold feature in the landscape even from Roseau.

CHAPTER X.

THE COLONIAL BAR — WEST INDIAN VIANDS — COLOURED AND NEGRO POPULATION—PUSILLANIMITY OF THE AUTHORITIES—PERILOUS TRAVELLING—DOMINICAN FRUITS.

As a general rule, the Bar is, throughout the colonies, at a very low ebb, seeking out and fermenting for their own professional benefit every incipient source of litigation. The dirty work done in this way in Dominica exceeds belief. "Dodson and Fogg," of Pickwickian celebrity, are here every-day people. Nor should the way in which criminal justice is administered in Dominica escape censure. Whilst I was here, a negro woman in a fit of rage beat out the brains of her child against a wall, and the two witnesses who alone could have convicted her, were recommended to run away; so they went off to Martinique, a distance of forty-five miles, and the affair fell to the ground from want of evidence.

Again, some hundred and fifty negroes at Point Michelle attacked a custom-house boat with stones, wounding the officers on duty and the crew so badly, that they were put under surgical treatment. In this case the ringleaders, being negroes, a writ of error relieved them. But, mark the difference when whites are the agressors. Captain S. O—— of the 54th, was grossly insulted in his quarters by a mulatto tailor. He did not touch the vagabond, but merely ordered the soldiers to chase him away; and for this he was fined forty pounds. Such is Dominica justice!

The majority of the lawyers and the juries are coloured men, who delight in punishing the whites. In fact, there is no justice for the whites in these miserable islands!

The sole Episcopal clergyman here (for he is not allowed a curate), is the Rev. Mr. Clark, a brilliant exception to the majority of clergymen in the West Indies, being a learned, pious and most amiable man. There are one or two Methodist parsons of whom I know nothing, and several Catholic priests—the last a very low set of peasants, French and Irish. These vulgar *padres* screw a great deal of money out of their ignorant negro congregations. The mingled pomposity, pride, and ignorance of the coloured people, put them out of the pale of society. They are utterly unfitted for the companionship of intelligent white people, of even ordinary education. The verbosity and bombast of these very inferior races make them a laughing-stock to men of sense. This is not the prejudice of

the whites, but simple fact; and, as a matter of course, the Dominican House of Assembly, in which there are only three white men, is a ludicrous arena for the display of inflated importance. The coloured tribes are exceedingly voluble, and as fond of speechifying, and as washy in matter, as the Americans.

I had for dinner some ramiers, or wild pigeons, *en doube.* These birds are justly considered great luxuries, and fully bear out their reputation, being exceedingly plump, with an agreeable bitter flavour, from feeding on the berries of the gomier tree. They generally sell for a shilling a-piece, so that, whilst the West Indies have many discomforts, and, generally speaking, a wretched larder, they have a few things superlatively excellent. Beef, veal, and mutton are decidedly bad, poultry poor, fish, compared with European, very indifferent; but in some other edibles they surpass Europe. Among these dainties, I may mention the following:

Lappe, the finest meat in all the world.
Quank, the wild hog; *buccannée,* very excellent.
Armadillo or Tatoo, very good, roasted.
Guana, far better than the poultry.
Crapeau, ditto ditto
Land crabs, dressed in the shell, *pas mal.*
Turtle, good, according as it is dressed.
Prawns, in Trinidad, enormous and of very fine flavour—when you can get them.
Oysters, excellent *in situ.*

Cray-fish, very large in Dominica.

Ramier, finer than grouse.

Guinea-hens (Pindata), the only fowls worth eating.

Turkeys, very good.

Mountain-cabbage, always excellent.

Anana, pine apple, a delicious fruit.

I must add that the supplies are, from the nature of the articles, very precarious.

September being a hurricane month, I was now on the *qui vive* for a pneumatic demonstration. The last ship had started for Europe, and we had that very monotonous view, a sea without a sail. The weather was made up of squalls of rain, with sickly calms between.

There are now no monkeys in Dominica, though the island once swarmed with these mischievous animals, but they did so much damage to the crops that a premium was offered *par tête*, and so they were exterminated. The female monkey is not allowed to be landed, under any pretext. There is in the woods a race of enormous parrots, called Ciceros, extremely difficult to shoot or to catch. They are dark green with a lilac ruff, and have a few yellow and red tail feathers. They can be taught to speak very distinctly.

Coffee was once the staple of the island, but, about 1832, a blight in the shape of a moth, by laying its larvæ on the leaves, destroyed the bushes, and the cultivation of coffee has since been abandoned for

sugar. Dominica averages about four thousand hogsheads of sugar annually.

There is no place in earth, perhaps, that has so wretched a set of local maps as the West Indies, yet a cheap and accurate set, at a *voyageur's* price, would do very well: as it is, all the maps have been reduced from the old inaccurate maps of eighty years ago, since which time names of rivers, headlands, estates, and even division of parishes, have been changed. The model for a series would be Colonel Reid's map of St. Lucia, beautifully done, accurate, and worthy of the man! *Voyageurs* who come out here cannot get anything like a travelling map of any island, pointing out the things worthy to be seen. Small maps at two shillings each would be all that would be required. As a general map of the West Indies, nothing can surpass that of Wyld's, of Charing Cross.

The local trade of Dominica consists mainly in carrying firewood to Barbadoes. A few sloops of small burthen paddle about also to the adjacent islands—Antigua, St. Kitts, St. Lucia and St. Vincent.

There are a great number of birds in Dominica, of that greenish yellow tint well known as the original colour of canaries. They are about the same size, but I do not know whether the races are identical.

Nothing shows the abominable disposition of the coloured people more, and by inference that of the negroes, than the atrocious acts and insolent aggressions which they commit on each other. As soon as any one considers himself able to tyrannize

over his weaker neighbour, justice and right are at once lost sight of. Under such circumstances, the vituperation and wailings of the injured, which so resound on all sides, are easily accounted for.

The brutality of negroes, and indeed of the coloured tribes generally, to animals, is, as I have before observed, something revolting, although they themselves yell aloud under the slightest castigation.

I went, for the second time, to the lake on the mountain. The views were beautiful, losing nothing of their grandeur from repetition. The lake, indeed, rather improved than otherwise, on a second visit. The mountains, utterly concealed before by clouds, were more visible. I got back to Roseau by half-past seven P.M., and found I had done a hard day's work—sixteen miles and five thousand feet of mountain to mount and to descend, from one P.M. to seven P.M.

Roseau is not a fragrant town. On the one hand, if you take a sniff, you have the Souffrière, smelling of sulphuretted hydrogen gas; on the other, if you have a breeze from seaward, you inhale the odours of all the accumulated filth of the locality.

One day, as a treat, I had a parrot for dinner, price 1*s.* 6*d.* The flesh was black, and the fat rather strong; but altogether it was not unlike a goose. This was one of the immense birds of the island, being as large as a young chicken. The creole name here for a parrot is Cicero, as a satire!

It is something astonishing what a number of hangers on, negro and coloured, one finds always

lounging about, or crossing one's path, in the house of a coloured person; people who have no ostensible occupation, sleeping about on the floor in the passages at night, and idling about, doing less than nothing all day, for the "bite and the sup." Most coloured and many creole families never sit down to a meal, but eat their food out of a basin, walking about the room. It is generally a negro mess—a few plantains or harricot beans, and pigeon peas, smothering a morsel of putrid salt fish. The vanity of the coloured people is so great, that comfort is sacrificed to outside show and display. It is astonishing how long the barbarous habits of their negro progenitors cling to them. As a general rule, their excessive assumption makes them extremely obnoxious to Europeans; the education of the best rarely rising above the mere capacity to read, write, and cypher; and their minds are, except for purposes for knavery, utterly uninformed.

A rather curious tree here is the *Cassia Fistula*, a large tree, bearing bunches of yellow flowers, very like a laburnum, yet having pendant from it, in great profusion, pods of a chocolate-brown colour, averaging twenty-eight inches in length, and filled with a sweet, unctuous matter, similar in flavour to linitive electuary, now made of senna and prunes: it is an exceedingly mild laxative.

There is something very ludicrous and puerile in the fear of the negroes, shown on all occasions by the authorities throughout the British West Indies. They submit to all their insolence with the deepest humility,

as a thing of course; which feeling the blacks are not slow to comprehend. This is the result of a feeble legislation at home, founded on ignorance and false principle; fettering the colonial officials, by preventing their local experience from being made available. I cannot conceive anything more lamentable than an ill-informed and stupid minister at home directing the movements of those who, from their position, must and do see how matters really stand. Colonel Reid—noble, mild, philanthrophic, but firm—saw clearly what was required out here, and acted accordingly, for which he was thrown over: the Queen, however, knew how to appreciate his merits, and rewarded, with a place of trust and honour, one of her most conscientious and high-minded officers.

Speaking to a creole lady here of that most disagreeable trait in the negro and coloured classes, of stealing upon you barefooted, and surprising you in your room before you are aware of it, or of peeping through the keyhole before they enter your room: "Oh!" said she, "we make up our mind to that sort of thing. We are so used to it, that we think nothing of it."

To a stranger, the difficulty of going over Dominica is very great. There are no resident proprietors in the island, and the managers of the various estates are so wretchedly paid as scarcely to be able to keep soul and body together; so they are unable to dispense anything like hospitality. There are no inns, no place where the wayworn traveller can stop and

rest; and, to say truth, the Dominicans are in spirit anything but hospitable. Formerly, indeed, it was different; but the foul blast of emancipation has withered everything, and now every one is for himself, and himself only.

To go anywhere, a horse and guide is indispensable. People do not like to lend their horses, and none can be had for hire. A guide must be taken, for how is a stranger to ford the rivers which everywhere intersect the route, and are never spanned by bridges? Mountain ranges are to be crossed; and if an accident were to happen, a horse to get restive or to come down on the top of a mountain, intersected on every side by ravines, where could the traveller, if alone, look for a chance of succour? Major M——, of the 54th, galloping in advance of a maroon party, along a mountain road, a few miles from Roseau, went over a gap, falling down a precipice on to the sea-shore; his horse was killed, and the gallant Major severely bruised. Some negroes in a boat saw him just as he returned to consciousness, but, mistaking him for the "jumbee," rowed away as hard as they could. By his own party, no notice was taken of his disappearance, until they arrived at the garrison, as he was supposed to be on before them. He was subsequently discovered by his servant, who happened to find a handkerchief hanging on a bush. The height from which he fell was about two hundred feet.

Taken altogether, the British West Indies are decidedly an unreclaimed fragment of the world. All

the proprietors, all who had any approximation to education or refinement, have deserted the country, and their places have been supplied by coarse, uneducated people from Great Britain; peasants by birth, and small tradesmen in manners, habits and feeling. Here and there, one gentlemanly clergyman or lawyer can hardly be considered an exception. Bankers' clerks usurp the place of gentlemen, and peddling merchants assume the airs of an aristocracy. Occasionally, but not often, one meets with a general practitioner, here dubbed "doctor," who is somewhat above an apothecary's boy in England; but, sooth to say, science, learning, or intelligence are not in the ascendant. Dr. Sayers and Dr. Mitchell, in Trinidad; Dr. Stackpole, in St. Vincent; and Dr. Imray, in Dominica, are creditable exceptions to that law of mediocrity which governs these almost-doomed islands. The lower classes, black and coloured, are neither more nor less than unmitigated barbarians, with vicious passions, the habits of savages, and a quality of brain to which that of a horse, a dog, or a goat, is decidedly superior.

An ant, about a quarter of an inch in length, and furnished with ample wings, settled on a book that I was reading. It was the first of the winged genus that I had seen. The other ants, whose name is legion, do wonders, moving bodily off with the corpse of a cockroach or a lump of sugar, in double quick time; a task far exceeding, in comparison, anything that man, even in Egypt, ever did.

I was told by a friend, that Dominica produced fine musk melons and splendid figs. I tried a melon, and found it one of the most insipid, flavourless fruits I ever tasted; as inferior to the melons of Turkey or of Italy, or the canteloupe of the United States, as it is possible to conceive. I need hardly notice, that our forced melons, or indeed other forced fruits of England, are superior to the indigenous fruits of any parts of the world. The figs which I tasted in Dominica, though highly considered there, bear no comparison to those of Turkey or Italy: indeed, the fruits of the Tropics may, on the whole, be considered insipid, by the side of those of Europe, north or south.

Labourers in Dominica gain ten dogs, or sixpence a-day. The population is about twenty-eight thousand.

CHAPTER XI.

DEPARTURE FROM DOMINICA—NIGHT SQUALL—MONSERRAT REDONDA—NEVIS—CHARLESTOWN—NEVIS PLANTERS—THE NEGRO POPULATION—BATH-HOUSE—DEPARTURE FOR ST. KITTS—BASSE-TERRE HILL—PERILOUS EXCURSION—BLACK TROOPS—A LEGAL CHARLATAN.

I LEFT Dominica for Nevis, in a Nova Scotia schooner, of eighty-one tons. Our crew consisted of the captain, three men, and a coloured lad. I preferred sleeping upon deck to the hot, uncomfortable bunk in the cabin.

About four o'clock in the morning, and whilst quite dark, I was roused by that intuitive feeling of danger which forms one of the most singular connections betwixt heaven and earth, belonging to our nature, only to look up and see a black and fearful looking squall close to windward of us, and hear it whizzing through our sails, we running with the wind on our quarter, under the try-sails, square-sail, and stay-sail set, in fact under all the canvass we could muster. The mate had been fast asleep up to the last moment, leaving the

merest greenhorn at the helm. "Hilloa," I exclaimed, "don't you see that squall?" "Yes, Sir, I do; but the mate is looking out." Suddenly the drowsy officer roared out for "all hands to take in sail," and dire was the confusion. There was not a light in the ship, not even in the binnacle, as to save expense the compass had been placed on the low quarter deck, to be read by moonlight. The captain jumped on deck, and fortunately it turned out only to be a rain squall, and we escaped better than we expected, or indeed deserved. A ship without a light, the crew all asleep, and a young hand only at the helm, was, in such a squall, rather a critical situation. It is generally under similar circumstances that ships in the West Indian seas upset.

Daybreak found us ten miles to leeward of Monserrat, its mountains looming blackly through the palpable obscure—their tops shrouded in dull and dense masses of vapour.

We sighted Redonda, a solitary rock, mid-channel between Monserrat and Nevis. It is about the height and size of the Bass Rock, off the Frith of Forth, and is quite uninhabited. It has on it three distinct mountains, with a stretch of level land on either flank, elongating itself on a near approach.

We made Gingerland Point, and stretched five or six miles along a low level plain, to weather Long Point, and then we beat into the open roadstead of Charlestown, the tiny capital of this lovely little island. Fortunately for us the wind blew strongly off shore, so

we landed in the ship's-boat without a wetting from the surf, an advantage not always attainable. I went straight to a strange barrack-looking mansion on a gentle eminence, to the right of the town, which bore the designation of the Bath Hotel.

The hotel commanded a noble prospect. The whole Island of St. Kitts, the Isle of St. Eustatia looming over Brimstone Hill, as far as Scotch-bonnet, twenty miles! the fine range of Mount Misery, four thousand three hundred feet in height, the houses of Basseterre, the capital, clearly in sight, eleven miles across the strait, the deep blue sea, with its glancing specks of light—the tiny triangular sail: still nearer, on our island, a beautiful plain stretched up eastward, nearly three miles to the mountain, three thousand feet in height, clothed with thick forest, serrated with bold ravines, and shewing here and there the bare precipice. This scene is not to be surpassed in the West Indies—rarely indeed is it equalled!

Nevis is about twenty-eight miles in circumference, and has many peculiarities, being governed by a President, assisted by a council of five members, and an assembly of about seventeen. It is an independent government, that is, not subordinate to any other island.

A portion of the labour here is done on a very singular system, called "shares." The planter gives a negro ground for the canes, and receives half the produce. This plan is said to work tolerably well, as from a variety of causes the produce is greater than by

ordinary estate labour. First, the negro takes good care that the canes are not stolen, the common source of loss to the planter. Then again, he can employ his wife and children in weeding, and as the patch does not average more than an acre or an acre and a half, it can be kept very clean. Thirdly, the man, instead of drumming and dancing, can employ himself in catching the rats, which do so much mischief by gnawing the canes half through. These "cane pieces," though rough to look at, produce well. Estate labourers get eightpence a day, and have to pay sixpence a week as rent for their houses.

The planters in Nevis, instead of being coarse illiterate Scotchmen, without capital, are all the descendants of old creole families, and are educated, intelligent gentlemen. They form the members of council, and of the assembly and the magistracy, besides filling many official situations; so that instead of the ignorant, coloured hucksters, who do such ludicrous things in the assembly at Dominica, Nevis is governed by men well acquainted with the island; whilst, as a consequence, society is much more united, and more kindly disposed towards them. The introduction of self-sufficient pompous mulattoes as members of an assembly is a thorough failure. They have neither sense nor the requisite knowledge to be of the slightest use, but gabble such nonsense, that people go to the assembly to laugh and amuse themselves with the absurdities of its members.

Besides a half-breed of buffaloes, there are about

eleven camels in Nevis, which are said to work well. The mountain is full of monkeys, some of which are three feet high, and exceedingly strong and fierce. They have black faces with light whiskers, olive-green fur, and a very long tail. They do great mischief by coming down in troops of fifties, to feed on the canes, potatoes, or anything of that class. The mountain abounds also in partridges and ramiers in the season, but no indigenous parrots. There are some snakes quite inoffensive; also centipedes and scorpions, not quite so innocent. But the great domestic annoyances are from sand flies; and worse than all, the most pertinacious and teasing house flies I ever met with. There are also a few mosquitoes. Mutton is the staple animal food of Nevis.

As elsewhere in the West Indies, the negroes are exceedingly familiar and impertinent, often becoming insolent in the remarks they make in the hearing of white persons. They are also great thieves and extortioners. Most of them keep horses, so that it is a common thing for a negro, or coloured carpenter, or other operative, to ride to his work. These fellows are in all things wretchedly bungling workmen, such as in England could not get employment on any terms. Mr. ——, requiring something done to a saddle, which, at the first saddlers in London, would cost only two shillings, three dollars (twelve shillings) were demanded in payment.

The great curse of the West Indies is as prevalent here as elsewhere: it is the furious tempers and angry

recriminations of the negroes resounding in all directions; no house is isolated enough to be out of hearing of the wearing noise of incessant quarrel.

The Bath-house is a curious-looking edifice. It was built of granite, at a vast expense, by the late Mr. John Huggins for himself and married sons, so that each family, though under the same roof, might have a distinct house, offices, &c.: consequently there are, in Edinburgh parlance, three flats. This arrangement turned out to be a failure, and after many vicissitudes ruinous to its occupants, part of it (the centre) became an hotel. Its arrangements are *bizarre*, but comfortable. The Thermal Baths consist, first of an exceedingly hot one for rheumatic patients, who derive great benefit from it; a tepid bath, of delightful temperature for cleanliness; and a well of chalybeated warm water for drinking. An imperfect analysis of the waters, by Dr. Davy, detected sulphur, iron, and a trace of iodine—trifling medical properties; but the real advantage is, that the temperature is kept up throughout the bath, the water losing nothing from atmospheric influences. Unfortunately, the late and present landlords have been negroes, so that a thermometer is a piece of "obea," quite beyond their comprehension: therefore, the temperature has not been tried thermometrically by the medical men. The trace of iodine, in the drinking well, makes it rather grateful to the stomach.

The air, up here, is pure; the views magnificent; and so people recover their health. The cocoa-palms,

and other fruit trees of the island, have all been blighted. Yet Nevis must be considered as the beau ideal of West Indian beauty.

Amongst the negroes here there is a good deal of obea, and secret poisonings. Though perfectly well known, it is impossible to bring home one case to a conviction. To strangers, Nevis is an extremely expensive place, though a cheap one to the inhabitants.

On November 10th, I left Nevis for Basseterre, the capital of St. Kitts, eleven miles distant. The fare, in a sloop of two tons, was one dollar. Canoes continually make the passage, and are, in consequence, often lost and their passengers drowned. The currents between the various islands are exceedingly strong, raising a nasty sea, whilst heavy squalls come off the mountains, increasing the danger. We had a pleasant run, and got to Mr. Jones's, the Red Lion Hotel, in about three hours.

The approach to St. Kitts, from the southward, is enchanting, opening a perfect vale of Paradise. The plain covered with bright green cane patches, and interspersed with houses and cocoa-palms, stretches gently back for three miles to a range of low hills on the north, bounded on the east by a range of sterile green hills, which abound with monkeys, and are covered with scrub, and enclose salt-pans. To the south, Nevis looms up with its serrated top, and minor mountains; and westward, we have Ottley's Hill and the Palmetto Point hill, inferior spurs of Mount Misery, the craggy peaks of whose cone are not visible from

Basseterre. Behind the town is the green mound of Monkey Hill rising above the plain about six hundred feet. The whole of the valley of the Basseterre is intersected by ravines. The only eye-sore is a swamp, generating miasma and mosquitoes, a little east of the town.

Basseterre itself, has the scrambling, dusty, dilapidated character of most West India towns, and is composed of groups of half a dozen negro houses, and then a decent structure, with straggling, withered cocoanut palms, here or there, or a few bananas peeping over some time-worn palings. Its streets and lanes are covered with volcanic sand-lava, triturated by the tread of centuries. Poverty, just short of squalor, is the characteristic of Antillean cities, to which impression the all but naked negro children lend great force.

Whilst a country village in England has almost every convenience, the capitals of most of the British West Indian islands have not the most obvious divisions of trade. Basseterre has not even a stationer's shop; but every store peddles in the commonest sort of stationery at an exorbitant price. There is not a hair-cutter or cutler's-shop in the town, though one or two negroes may be found, who manage to crop one's redundant locks. Nor is there a tailor's shop, though there are several botchers of clothes, living in wretched negro-houses. One decently conducted person from England, in each of these trades, would certainly do very well. So great is the general mismanagement out here, that even the newspapers

are not published for two or three days after they are due—the Tuesday's paper coming out on Friday, the Friday's paper on Monday, &c. Only one or two of the streets are named, and those have not their names written up, nor are there any names over the stores. The silly shopkeepers are too grand for that, and believe their importance to be so great, that strangers are to know by intuition, where they are to be found.

The Basseterre negroes are excessively rude and insolent; but there is no protection against their impertinence, which transcends anything that we in Europe can imagine of the lower orders. A most desirable law out here would be punishment for insolence, as provoking a breach of the peace; or if broken as a consequence, the breach of the peace should be visited on the provoker. As it is, the negroes are encouraged to every excess or license of tongue, by the criminal impunity which they enjoy. The Governor and the highest crown officers are continually insulted in the streets by impertinent remarks made on them in their hearing.

There is one thing, however, to say in favour of the black population of Basseterre. We have here no drumming, or clapping of hands, or singing in chorus, the horrible sources of disgust in other islands. There is an admirable hospital in the town, connected with the poor house: also a lunatic asylum, a clean, well-built jail, a good court house, and, more than all, a very excellent private subscription library, containing many thousand volumes of first-rate works,

newspapers, periodicals, &c. The St. Kitts people are extremely liberal, in affording to strangers the advantages of an institution beyond all price in this unliterary and barbarous quarter of the globe.

The Episcopal Church of Basseterre is a very primitive building indeed, whilst the wooden ribs of a more ambitious structure, a few yards off, are falling to decay from want of funds. At present there is a horrible schism between "High Church" and "Low Church," Puseyite against Episcopal.

The magnificoes of Basseterre are the shopkeepers and their shopmen. The latter wear mustachios, imperials, and dandy dresses, ride their nags, and (as a creole informed me), "lead here." They are by no means of so high a caste, or so well informed, as shopmen in England, but talk and act as if their superiors did not exist anywhere. Indeed, throughout the West Indies, it is high treason to hint that there is any class of gentlemen, *par excellence*, in the world. Noble birth, education, elegant manners, and fortunes that command all the splendours of life, with the taste to appreciate them must be carefully kept out of sight, lest it grate offensively on the ear of the counter-skipping *élégant* and his trading master. The educated clergyman, the lawyer, and the physician are looked down upon by the shopocracy of the West Indies.

St. Kitts is the first island, coming north, where the v's and w's become perverted: "vel," "vy," "vot," "wessels," "wictuals," &c., roll out here in

true cockney style. How this orignated it is impossible now to tell. The inhabitants of St. Barts also are conspicuous for this unenviable peculiarity, and certainly with females setting up for ladies, it is rather remarkable.

St. Kitts is noticeable amongst the Antilles for using the plough and hoe husbandry, in the cultivation of the sugar cane. In the lighter labours of field husbandry, women are extensively employed, gaining sixpence sterling a-day; and as these sable damsels have usually their own houses and provision grounds, the pay is ample. The field men occasionally gain eightpence a-day. The higher class of operatives, as boiler-men, coopers, &c., are paid better wages.

The views about Basseterre are beautiful in the extreme. On the hills overlooking Cayon, the Islands of St. Martins and St. Bartholomew are in sight to the north, whilst to the east, Antigua is distinctly visible; and south-east rises the towering dome of Nevis. Views present themselves of which people at home have no conception, and to which the lofty aloe, the cabbage-palm (*Palma nobilis*), and the cactus in two of its varieties, give a beautiful tropical character.

I walked over the hills above Cayon, and startled an animal, which at first I took to be a hare. Half a dozen others followed, skipping nimbly up the crags, and I then discovered that they were monkeys. They always fly from man, unless their infants are attacked, when the assailant might chance to get the worst of

it. They contemn dogs, and meet them fearlessly, ending the combat by ripping up their bowels, or biting the cranium longitudinally in half. A good stout bull-dog had the temerity to attack a Nestor of the simial community, and before his master could rescue him the monkey laid him dead. The cranium had been as cleanly divided longitudinally, as if it had been done with a knife!

I set off by sea for the garrison at Brimstone Hill, *via* Sandy Point, a distance of about eleven miles. Owing to the violent flurries of wind, or dry squalls, that rush down the ravines of Mount Misery, this little voyage, except in moderate weather, is a very dangerous one. We had had a furious gale blowing for three days, and it was not without great difficulty that our smart little droghing craft of eight tons, could get under way. Anchor up, we swept away before the blast like a sea-gull. So violent were the squalls, that the sea was frizzed with white drift; and although our *quasi* black skipper followed the orthodox nautical maxim of "luff when it blows," and shook her in the wind, we were pressed down, until the water was up to the combings of the hatches. Our skipper remarked that there were, "plenty squalls here; but I not mind um; I know where um live—I watch um." Nevertheless, I was glad to get under the lee of Brimstone Hill, and run to smooth anchorage off Sandy Point, a small town at the western extremity of the island. On the same night, a fine drogher of twelve tons, on her passage back to Basse-

terre, went down off the garrison point, and one man was drowned. The rest of the crew escaped by jumping into their little dingy. In smooth weather, row-boats constantly pass between the two places. The scenery along the coast is very pretty, the bright green cane-fields, with their mills and sugar works, occupying the smooth "levels" between the deep ravines which characterize St. Kitts, the gloomy forests of Mount Misery overtopping all.

The garrison is perched on an isolated mountain, seven hundred and fifty feet in height, commanding an extensive view. St. Eustacia lifts its lofty dome nine miles to the north-west; and Saba, a little further still to the westward, whilst St. Martins and St. Barts loom to the north. South-east rises Nevis twenty miles, with Montserrat peeping over its shoulder—not a bad assemblage of islands to be seen from one spot. Behind are seen the lower portions of Mount Misery, but its lofty peak, four thousand three hundred feet high, is not visible. On the occasion of my visit, Brimstone Hill was garrisoned by a detachment of the 54th, one from the 3rd West India, and a few artillerymen, with the usual staff of engineers and commissariat.

From its height, most people would suppose Brimstone Hill to be a healthy spot; such, however, is not the case. Remittant fever, of a mild form, had run through the white troops during the season, so that as many as forty had been at one time in the hospital, to say nothing of officers and their wives and families.

Some of the military inhabitants were never quite well. The hill is also exposed to furious gusts of wind from the neighbouring mountains, whilst malaria creeps up its ravines, which, by the way, abound in monkeys, although I never could catch a glimpse of one.

There are but few birds in St. Kitts, which is easily accounted for, there being no shelter for them in the cultivated parts, and the monkeys, who swarm in the deep woods, steal their eggs, which they look upon as a great dainty.

I went, with a party from the garrison, starting at eleven A.M. from Brimstone Hill, round the back of the island to Basseterre. Our conveyance was a four-wheeled phaeton, most skilfully driven by Captain Jones, of the 54th. The distance to the capital is about sixteen miles.

On the north or windward side of St. Kitts, the range of mountains lie further back from the coast than on the south side, and resolve themselves into three distinct groups, each having its mass of peaks and precipices, all deeply-wooded in solemn green, and frowning heavily beneath their veil of clouds. Mount Misery is the westernmost of all, except Brimstone Hill. From the greater space between the sea-shore and the mountains, the estates are larger, and, perhaps, the soil more fertile, than on the southern coast, and apparently well cultivated. Generally speaking, the canes looked healthy and vigorous.

At Deep Bay, an immense reef, bristling with

breakers, stretches far out, and the whole sea-board looks ugly enough. The roads, with the exception of a bit or two, are exceedingly good. We crossed several ravines, one of which, of tremendous depth, led down to Ottley's village—a few negro houses, with a store, where bread, salt fish, ale, porter and new rum, with the other luxuries of negro life, were vended on the usual terms. Our unicorn turn-out, of course, attracted great attention from the dark ladies, and awful were the quizzings we were doomed to undergo. The post-horn of one of the party, with our hats, were all objects of notice, attracting such remarks as: "Dem buckra mad for true!" "Me no sabby why dat officer make noise wid dat ting!" I ought to observe, that it is a habit in the West Indies, for military officers off duty, to wear the oddest-looking hats that it is possible to imagine; round-topped, shallow-felt hats, that twist into any shape, or tarpaulins covered with white jean. In fact, the military man is only recognized by his free and easy manner, a frankness and courtesy combined, which the vulgar pretender can never attain, but which excites Blackee's astonishment. At Cayon village the mountains cease, and we rounded the base of the Cayon hills to Conada estate, from which three miles brought us to Basseterre, and so back to Brimstone Hill by half-past six, P.M.

This "going round the island" does not include the long tail of hummocky furze-covered hills, which

stretch out ten miles eastward of Basseterre, ending in the "narrows," hardly three miles from Nevis.

Excessive cruelty to horses seems to be one of the ruling propensities of the negro, who cannot be brought to understand that a horse can feel, or that he is a superior animal to himself, so that up hill or down hill, he gallops the poor beast at the top of his speed over any sort of road, even when paved; and if not carefully looked after, will bring the horse in heated, and leave him unfed and untouched in the stable for hours. Of course, the horses so ridden are constantly lamed. A negro invariably mounts a horse on the wrong side, and cannot be persuaded that one way is more desirable than the other; consequently, your horse is always brought to you for mounting with the near side towards you.

Officers of West India regiments are very fond of contending for the strict equality in point of courage and talent of the black with the white troops, but in spite of this allowable *esprit de corps*, the truth will sometimes reluctantly come out.

"The black troops are as courageous as the white," said an officer of the —— West India regiment to me; "but once fairly excited, they are beyond control. They are very willing to obey an order, as far as they can be made to comprehend it, but their intellect is so limited, and their powers of reflection are so slight, that we can trust little or nothing to the non-commissioned officers; so that in addition to our usual duties, we

have to do that which, amongst the whites, would be done by colour-sergeants, corporals, &c. Their ideas on discipline, dress and neatness, are extremely lax, so that we have great trouble in keeping them in anything like military order. They have furious animal passions, and were we to restrain them too far, they would mutiny." Black soldiers are extremely noisy in barracks.

I went to the pony races at Frigate Bay, a beautifully sequestered spot amongst the hills, four miles from Basseterre. The ponies were ridden by negro boys, equipped *à la Jocky*, and looking very like monkeys; but riding remarkably well. Indeed, many of the negroes ride capitally, though they all stick their feet at right angles with the sides of the horse. The officers of the garrison won; and we wound up with a splendid dinner at Jones's, decidedly the best house in the West Indies, and kept by a very civil man.

The worst of a West Indian dinner, is the absence of all green vegetables; you have no greens, or cabbage, or anything verdant, not even a salad. Occasionally, one has a dish of pigeon peas; but they are anything but green. All this is from bad management and habit, and should not be set down to climate.

We got back to Brimstone Hill by midnight. I found the drive an excessively dangerous one on a dark night, owing to the hilliness of the road and the

sharp angles crossing the ravines. For some distance, too, it ran along the rocky sea-beach, where accidents often happen. The nomenclature of the localities is appropriate, though rather dismal. We passed such places as "Nine turn gut," "Bloody-river," and "Bloody-point," where a battle took place between the French and English colonists.

In encouraging the insolence, insubordination and knavery of the negro, none are so conspicuous as the stipendiary magistrates, who protect the negro to the utmost of their power, when wrong, from any punishment awarded by the colonial magistracy. Every impediment is thrown in the way of the white when seeking justice or protection, and especially of the military. However insolent or insulting a negro may be to an officer, even within the precincts of a garrison, he must neither be touched nor driven away; for if either be attempted, an action for assault will be brought against him, and enormous damages will be awarded by the black and coloured jury, the opportunity of wreaking their vengeance in any way being too tempting to be lost. It is perfectly certain that many mulattoes provoke a breach of the peace as a means of making money. Captain Skurry, of the 54th regiment, was fined fifty pounds for only ordering his men to drive away a mulatto who was insolent to him, and who refused to quit that officer's quarters at Morne Bruce, Dominica, when required. It was not even pretended that a blow was struck. The result of

all this is, that the most outrageous insolence and insult by words, must be borne without retaliation.

On the 1st January, 1850, a party of officers of Brimstone Hill garrison were returning home in a phaeton from an expedition, and on entering the grand portal of the inner barrier, in a heavy shower, found it filled with negro and coloured civilians. They requested the crowd to make room for them to pass, which was refused, though positively far within their own precincts. After some delay and altercation, the negroes had the insolence to say, "We don't give you passage as a right, but as an act of courtesy." These negroes were from the town, and had been visiting at the house of a coloured subordinate connected with the commissariat. They were without passes, and were clearly subject to arrest for being within the garrison bounds at all, at that hour, yet had the slightest attempt been made by the officers to force an entrance, an action for assault would assuredly have been brought, and, as surely, enormous damages would have been awarded by the jury.

A still more glaring case occurred to Lieutenant Gillum of the 54th. He was officer for the day, and, on going his rounds at eleven o'clock at night, was informed that two drunken negro fiddlers were in the citadel, the quarters of the black troops, and had excited the troops into a state of mutiny. He, however, declined to interfere, as the black troops had their own officers; but shortly afterwards the negro fiddlers

were ejected, and being told that, if they went away quietly, no further notice would be taken of the matter, were marched by Lieutenant Gillum to the outer gate of the garrison, where a corporal's guard was stationed. No sooner were they outside the gate, though still within the garrison boundary, than they turned round and abused the officer, threatening to take his life whenever they could catch him. On hearing these threats, the sentry was so irritated that he rushed out unbidden, and brought back the offenders as prisoners. They were given over to the main guard, and put into the charge of the sentry until a policeman could be obtained, who, with true negro carelessness of time, did not come until the next morning; when they were carried before the magistrates, who, as the policeman neglected to apprize the prosecutor, and he did not appear, dismissed the case. A week afterwards Lieutenant Gillum was summoned to Basseterre, ten miles off, to answer a charge of false imprisonment; and, in spite of the evidence of the commandant of the garrison and of the major of the black troops, that Lieutenant Gillum had only done his duty, he was found guilty of false imprisonment, and fined five pounds sterling, which, to show the *motive* of the action, one of the negroes, as soon as the trial was over, went up to the judge on the bench to claim, and was dreadfully disappointed to find that neither he nor his comrade was to receive it. As a general rule the ignorant, or at best half educated mulatto, who can only

spell through a book or write an illegible scrawl, insists on his social equality with the educated gentleman. The stipendiary magistrate, in the most criminal manner, fosters instead of suppressing these absurd but most dangerous pretensions. I regret to add, that many of these highly-paid magistrates are men of very indifferent character. One of them, at the detachment mess of the 54th, at Brimstone Hill, St. Kitts, when I was present, conducted himself in a manner to excite the disgust and contempt of the very gentlemanly officers composing the party; and the only excuse that could be made for him was—that he was *disgracefully drunk!* These officials are greatly overpaid, receiving for merely nominal duties four hundred and fifty pounds a-year. Nor must I omit to add that, so low and sunk is law and justice in these colonies, that the negroes are stimulated by the lawyers to bring such actions, in order to bleed both parties. Two leading lawyers in Dominica are notorious for this sort of dirty work.

The hatred of the negro and coloured tribes to the military, arises from the feeling that it is they alone who stand between them and the utter freedom from restraint which they desire. They know that least of all is the officer likely to admit the equality which they so impudently assume, as he, in common with all Europeans, save the subservient stipendiary, constantly checks in manner and word their insolence and insubordination. I have no hesitation in saying that, such

is the state of the British West Indies at the present moment, that, were it not for the military, no white man's life would be worth a month's purchase, and most of this bad feeling is fostered by the stipendiary magistracy. The military force at present in the West Indies is far too small for their critical position; for it is not a foreign but an internal enemy that we have to fear, and that will be discovered when too late.

In St. Kitts, the highest legal authority in point of rank during my sojourn in the island, played the flute in a wretched style at half dollar public concerts, when he got hired. He also danced quadrilles very execrably, and had danced "Jim Crow" in Dominica. He played "Dr. Pangloss" in private theatricals. Such is the manner in which the dignity of the high seat of justice is sometimes sustained out here. This great functionary is since dead.

I left Brimstone Hill for Basseterre on the 26th February, after an agreeable visit of ten weeks among the officers of the garrison, to whose courtesy and *bonhommie* I feel greatly indebted. Our newspapers speak of the withdrawal of the British troops from these colonies: then—farewell all!

"Discord, dire sister of the slaughtering power,"

will prevail; and the West Indies be lost to us for ever!

Of all the islands, St. Kitts seems to be the most irretrievably ruined, and, from the somewhat higher

caste of the planting population, the consequent privations are more severely felt. The tantalizing shadow remains, but the substance is gone.

I was now once more amongst the insolent and insubordinate black and coloured population of Basseterre, who, for impertinence, are I believe not to be equalled in the West India islands. The civil powers are *nil*. "Consider them as baboons," said a high official to me, "and then you'll get on very well with them." This is much more easily said than done; but what a commentary on the people!

CHAPTER XII.

A WEST INDIAN PASSAGE-BOAT—ARRIVAL AT DOMINICA—VISIT TO THE CHAUDIÈRE—PRIESTLY EXTORTIONS—HOT SPRINGS—PRINCE RUPERT'S BAY.

On Saturday, March 16th, I took a passage for Dominica in a sloop of forty tons, worked by a "smart" captain, all but black. He had been in the Columbian service, which means in a Brazilian slaver. This vessel carried emigrants from one island to another; in reality, negroes, negresses and mulattoes, who, when one place became too hot to hold them, levanted to a fresh spot. These shameless vagabonds were bound to Trinidad, and the scenes which took place on board were most disgusting, all in presence of the "smart" captain, who never attempted to check them. For the greater part of the passage, the captain was coiled up asleep in a dog-house on deck, leaving the negro crew to carry on the navigation as they best might, which responsibility they quickly shifted on to

their drudge, a lad of thirteen, who, as might have been expected, was generally steering one way and looking another, or dozing at his post; yawing the ship two or three points on either side her course, while the other hands stowed themselves away to sleep.

Of steering in light winds, negroes know nothing. As long as a brisk breeze is blowing any way, they do pretty well; but for taking advantage of any flaws, or holding their own in light weather, they have not the slightest idea. They are indeed far too careless by nature to pay attention to such matters; so that, in latitudes where light weather is very common and the currents are very strong, a voyage of one hundred and sixty miles is often a very protracted affair. As most of the islands are in sight of each other, a passage becomes, in the daytime, a mere pilotage; and our old dim compass placed on a settle was of no use. Nor was it lighted at night during the whole passage.

Although the voyage was understood to be direct to Dominica, we were, for the purposes of the captain, carried over to Nevis, to which place the skipper and vessel belonged, and were kept there two days! I living on shore, of course at my own expense. We sailed from Nevis on Tuesday morning, and, after the usual contrary winds, calms, and other marine vicissitudes, reached Roseau on Friday the 22nd, and right glad was I to escape from the smart captain and his disgusting passengers.

A negro is never worthy of trust. He considers no interest but his own, and this he will pursue in defiance

of any compact he may have made, or of any right implied on the part of those with whom he may have treated. He has abundance of low cunning, but this is not intellect. Nor can he ever be trusted with money. Buying some goods at a store in Dominica, I said to the shopkeeper: "Send them home with a bill, and I will pay the bearer."

"Oh no, Sir," was the reply; "pay the first time you are passing, but if you give the money to the porter we shall never see it."

This was reiterated to me a hundred times in the West Indies, by as many different persons in various places.

Dominica has been called an unhealthy island, but it was certainly extremely healthy during my residence there, and had been so for two years previously. Epidemics seem to visit these islands periodically. From the situation of Roseau, in the south-west, the heat is much greater than at St. Kitts.

There are some coloured people, or persons of African descent, so fair, that no new arrival in the West Indies would guess that they were not what is called white; but they retain some of the predominant characteristics of the negro race. These are, horrible tempers, with an abominable scowl on the countenance; great pride and vanity, and a degree of avarice that would shame a Jew. People must be months, nay years, in these islands, before they can understand the negro character; so deceptive is it to

the transitory observer. The negro, to serve a purpose, can be a consummate hypocrite.

I went, with two officers of the garrison, to visit the Souffrière, six miles south from Roseau, and two from Scott's Head. We were most hospitably received and entertained by Mr. L—— and his handsome sisters, at the Souffrière estate, one of the best in the island.

The sulphur lies at the bottom of a deep valley, a mile and a half back from the beach, in the side of a mountain on the north. The whole volcanic laboratory looks like a succession of lime-pits, dug in the side of the mountain, the ground being calcined into a white, hardish crust, which abounds with cavities or mouths, exuding puffs of steam, combined with crystals of sulphur. The soil is hot, and a stream of hot, black, fœtid water, of the true Stygian type and colour, winds its tortuous course into the valley below.

After scrambling over this treacherous soil for a short time, we turned sharp to the north-east for a few hundred yards, to see the Chaudière, or boiling-springs; and an ugly-looking *locale* it was. We went to leeward first, and got half suffocated by the fierce blasts of hot steam, which rushed up eight feet high, and roared angrily, like the safety-valve of a locomotive, when letting off the steam, enveloping us in its stifling vapour. We got back as fast as possible, and went round to the windward side. Here we found three distinct fountains, a foot or so in diameter, bubbling up so violently as to eject the boiling water in jets of a

foot high. It was impossible to approach very closely, as well from the heat as from the treacherous character of the crust on which we stood, since fire cannot be far below the surface to produce such violent action. A few minutes more sufficed for inspection, as the eye comprehends at a glance the whole operation. Of course, the air is fully impregnated with the nauseous sulphurous effluvia. One bocca I noticed, similar to the mud volcanoes at Ledros, Trinidad, only that it ejected hot mud in violent ebullition. The whole formation was hot to the feet.

There are three sets of Chaudières in different spots about here; but we were quite satisfied with what we had seen; finding it very hot work, at mid-day in the Tropics, penned up in a narrow valley, inclosed by mountains at least fifteen hundred feet in height, and with the additional heat of this natural bakehouse. Sulphur was once manufactured here by a Mr. Watt, but, from the length of the voyage home, did not pay; so the works were abandoned.

A little below the active Souffrière, there runs a stream of clear hot water, frequented by rheumatic negroes. Mr. L—— purposes erecting a few cottages here, to which invalids of a higher class might have access. A spring of hot water bubbles up also on the sea-beach.

Formerly, we conceived ourselves to be four hundred miles or so above the incandescent matter of which the centre of the earth undoubtedly consists, and therefore quite safe; but Humboldt, in his

"Cosmos," reduces it to thirty miles!—whilst in many localities we are certainly nearer still to fire—closer far than we dream of. There may yet be a break-out at the Souffrière.

Although to visit this spot once is all very well, the Scott's Head Souffrière of Dominica excites but little interest in people who, like myself, are conversant with the larger volcanoes of Etna and Vesuvius. The whole of this secluded valley, however, will repay inspection, the scene being very West Indian. The half-naked negro washwomen rinsing their clothes in the canals, which supply water for the mill of the estate, with half-a-dozen sable nymphs swimming about like frogs in a tank or reservoir constructed for the same purpose, constitute one of the strangest features of the picture.

In Dominica, as in Ireland, or any other Roman Catholic country, two conflicting interests are at work: the Protestants of every religious denomination are seeking, by education, to improve the capacity of the negro, whilst the Catholic priests are interested in keeping them ignorant, or worse, in filling them with superstitions by which they may profit. These priests are very low caste French or Irish peasants; unprincipled men, extremely well off, though ever pleading poverty: and so long as the mass of the black population are Roman Catholics, it is impossible for them to be reclaimed, as the priests would then lose their power and profit. But in truth, the negroes are everywhere retrograding.

"I tried to institute schools for them," said Archdeacon Clarke to me, "and to improve them in every possible way; but after a time they refused to send their children, and the thing failed. The negroes are fast retrograding, and what is ultimately to become of these islands I cannot even divine."

This is the opinion of a highly-educated and pious divine, who had resided in the West Indies for twenty-five years.

From another source, I ascertained that the attendance of the priests on a first-rate funeral in the Roseau Catholic church costs twenty-five dollars—about five guineas. The expenses of dressing the church with funereal trappings, candles, &c., and of digging the grave, is, in addition, required to be defrayed by the friends of the defunct; and eight days afterwards, another twenty-five dollars is exacted for purgatorial masses, making in the whole, ten guineas for the priests alone, exclusive of the undertaker's bill. Two years ago, forty dollars was demanded for each of the two services, or sixteen guineas; but the price has been lowered to meet the times. There is a second-rate service of seven or eight dollars for the poorest class, for which price the corpse gets merely the sign of the cross, and a sprinkle of holy-water at the church-door. Those who cannot muster this fee are buried without any church ceremony at all.

For the burial service according to our rites, the Episcopal clergyman here receives, including the

digging of the grave, six dollars, one pound five shillings. Is it, therefore, likely that so fertile a source of profit to the Catholic priests would be hazarded by allowing negroes to be enlightened, even to the very limited degree of which they are susceptible?

West Indian sunsets present nothing striking. We walk out here, after dinner, hoping to enjoy the calm and cool of the evening, but are disappointed, whilst the quiet is interrupted by the quarrels of the negroes and their yells and vituperations. Every cluster of houses, however small, has its recognised virago, who keeps the whole neighbourhood in an uproar. This is perfectly unchecked, and not one of the eight or nine black or coloured policemen would dream of interfering.

Much discrimination is required here in making new acquaintances, so thoroughly unprincipled are many men in positions which ought to insure at least decency of conduct. But principle, character, or talent, are not considered at home in filling up responsible situations in these colonies. Servile agents, the more corrupt the better, are chosen, as they more readily do the dirty work of a silly, ignorant colonial minister, endeavouring to carry out a policy, the consequences of which cannot be otherwise than disastrous. The natural consequence is, that all official people are to be approached with caution, and their advances avoided, until you are satisfied that they are neither outlaws nor swindlers.

In Trinidad and Dominica, the most flagrant in-

stances came under my notice; and the parties being chiefly lawyers and magistrates, the iniquity of the practice was more eminently obvious.

I rode with Dr. C——, of the staff, about four miles up the Roseau valley, to visit the hot springs of Wotton-Waven, a route through the most fairy-like scenes it is possible to imagine. Precipitous mounds of six and seven hundred feet in height, bristling to their tops with a gigantic tropical sylvia, and backed by lofty green mountains, having, on either side, lateral valleys, green, solemn and deserted, yet fit to be the abode of Queen Titania and her merry elfin train.

We crossed the Roseau river several times until we attained its southern side, when turning due south, we ascended the undulating ridges of the Wotton-Waven estate. The brawling river, deep below us, rushed over its rocky bed with angry impetuosity, whilst above towered rough, bristly heights, sustaining in the loose soil huge boulders of trap, which might be detatched at any moment and crush the wayfarer beneath. Immense blocks which had so fallen lined our path.

Turning east, from the works of the estate, with its powerful water-mill, we surmounted a rather steep ridge, and descended into a deep gorge which wound around the base of the hills, along the bottom of which ran the river. Reaching the water, a few yards up stream brought us to the first scene of thermal action, a superficial cavernous hollow in the tufa rock. Here there was merely a vent, out of which poured

with great violence a jet of scalding steam, emitting at intervals, through an aperture a few feet below it, a gush of boiling water, which trickled into the main stream. The curious feature here, was the intermission of the fountain, the discharge of water being suspended for about two minutes, and then returning with some violence for the same space of time. The water, which reaches the boiling point, is chiefly impregnated with common salt (chloride of sodium) with a trace of lime, yet where it falls and forms tiny stalactites, the incrustations, interspersed with minute iron pyrites, are strongly aluminous, though no alum has been detected in the water itself. The roof of the tufa cavern where acted on by the hot vapour, assumed a deep ferruginous tint. Altogether it was an unsightly hole.

Led by clouds of steam, which curled in dense volumes through the foliage, we crossed the river and scrambled up a steep bank to a point in its vicinity, whence we crossed a negro provision-ground to the edge of a ravine, and caught a glimpse of another bend of the river, now a hundred feet below us. There, overshadowed with wild plantain, the stream formed a pretty little cataract of ten or twelve feet in height, but as the volume of steam was on our side of the river and close below us, we could not see its source.

We retraced our steps, striking into a still ascending path nearly at right angles with the river, entered a wood, and a few yards to the left, came upon the Grande Chaudière, a crater of boiling, bubbling,

spluttering mud, in a circular space, about six feet in diameter. The surface was perfectly flush or level, and honeycombed with irregular boccas, in each of which a body of thin grey mud bubbled up in violent action. A sulphurous smell pervaded the air, and impure crystals of sulphur could be detected in the more desiccated mud. The roar of subterranean action, apparently only just below the surface, was very distinct. We were surrounded by empty mud holes, formerly the sites of similar cauldrons. Three or four yards below were three fountains of boiling water, similar in diameter and height to those of the Souffrière. Altogether this was the most striking display of internal fire, unless, as Dr. C—— suggested, the heat is owing to the chemical combustion of various substances, such as sulphur, iron, nitre and so forth, and, therefore, might be quite independent of fire. But steam and hot water are both volcanic elements.

We bivouacked and refreshed under the shade of some stately trees, which, however, were quite rotten. From the glorious effulgence flickering through the diversified foliage, the glimpses of the distant mountain ridges, and the cool shade we enjoyed under a fierce tropical sun, the spot was worthy of being the site of Don Quixote's well. The stream in which we had been so entangled, is full of vents, which evaporate steam. The arborescent ferns were very fine, especially one, full thirty feet in height, and covered with parasitic islands; the wild plantain, wild

anana, and other tropical productions were in great profusion.

Moonlight nights in these islands are curses to all quielty-disposed people, from the horrible drumming and chorus-singing resounding in every direction. The tum-tum is a very sonorous instrument, and being played with admirable precision by the negroes, disturbs a whole neighbourhood, and can be readily heard two miles off.

I went with Captain Howell and Lieutenant Byrne down to Prince Rupert's, a once celebrated bay and garrison, about twenty miles north of Roseau. We started at half past two o'clock, A.M. The row is a long and disagreeable one, as the canoe people coast every little bay and nook, at the distance of only a few yards from the beach. This is done with the hope of escaping the strong currents and flaws of wind from the mountains. We were too near the land to see the grandeur of the scenery; but after escaping two or three dangers, from the carelessness and drunkenness of our tawny palinurus, we entered the magnificent Bay of Prince Rupert, which is about two miles deep and the same in breadth. The garrison is at the base of two hills on the northern side of the bay.

The barracks command a magnificent view of the Mounts Diablotins, the highest range in the island. They are green to their summits, yet bold and precipitous, whilst an inferior but still most picturesque range of mountains, bounds the bay to the eastward.

The fact will hardly be believed at home, but certainly two-thirds of Dominica have never yet been explored. No one here has spirit enough to organize an expedition into the interior, out of the beaten track. Vague rumours occasionally come down from erratic negroes: but to the civilized world—if the term be not misapplied *in toto* to the white population out here—the interior of Dominica is as much a *terra incognita*, as the sources of the White Nile in Africa. St Vincent and Trinidad are almost as bad. A very fine, extensive lake is said to exist in the interior of Dominica, but no white man has, as yet, seen it. Any race of whites might readily populate the mountainous regions of these islands; and a very good way, too, it would be of gradually superseding the necessity for the negro.

It would be a good plan to give small allotments gratis, in these mountains, to orderly, well-conducted Protestant natives of Madeira, as a nucleus for a white creole, *i. e.*, acclimatized labouring population. The negro will ever be a bad peasant; and nature has unfitted him for anything higher in the social scale.

Prince Rupert's Bay was the site of several engagements between the French and English for the possession of Dominica. The barracks, which are built at the entrance of a little valley between two hills, proved so unhealthy from the miasma of an undrainable swamp to windward of them, that the white troops were withdrawn, and only a few African soldiers with a negro sergeant are allowed to remain. These

wind than we wanted. How the negro does contrive to blunder his way by night at sea, is to me incomprehensible. The man at the helm is generally looking one way and steering another, or fairly nodding over the tiller; and the rest of the crew, half tipsy, coil themselves up to sleep, so that on any emergency they are never ready to act, whilst the compass (in this case down in the cabin) is consulted once in an hour or so, by the light of an old lanthorn.

Nevertheless, daybreak found us standing off and on in the harbour of St. Pierre, Martinique, where the captain had a "message to deliver," which would detain him only half an hour; but we did not make sail till three o'clock in the afternoon. He had, in fact, been beating up for passengers, and negociating for some dozens of wretched brooms, made of the flags of cocoa-trees; we, on our parts, were taken by the *douaniers* for smugglers, and although only in the roadstead, and not at anchor, my luggage was unmercifully searched—a pleasant disarrangement of one's nicely-packed chattels.

As the half-hour would, by the captain's admission, expand to an hour, I went on shore to breakfast, and to see as much as I could of the town, which, though considered to be only an approximation to a third-rate French town, is still far superior to any West Indian town belonging to England. Its trades include tailors, hatters, watch-makers, jewellers, &c.,—all Europeans. There are *cafés* of course, whilst lamps, dim and dreary enough, but still lamps, hang across the streets. St.

Pierre is backed by steep-wooded heights, up which many of the streets actually climb, while a violent rush of water is constantly dashing down them. As seen from the sea, St. Pierre, with its houses painted of various colours in fresco, looks very like an Italian city, only that palms and bananas supply the place of the cypress and the maritime stone pine.

French West Indiamen, of which three or four were in the roads, are certainly finer ships of their class than ours.

A heavy thirty-six gun French frigate, was at her moorings, and a twenty gun English one; but I did not like the appearance of the French man-of-war. The officers looked slouching, with their broad-hipped Cossack trousers, and their ungloved hands stuffed into the pockets.

Most of the younger men at Martinique—white, coloured, and official, wear the frightful imperial. As seen behind, the officials look like pages, who have outgrown their liveries.

St. Pierre lines the beach of a shallow circular bay, protecting it on the north and south, whilst the east is quite shut out. It is, however, scarcely more than a roadstead. The mountains south of St. Pierre, to the point where an immense channel seems to divide Martinique in two (La Rivière Salée), are very fine indeed. This gulph is so broad that the land at its termination is scarcely visible; we crossed it in a nasty breezy sea, but on getting hold of the true south end of the island, about Cape Solomon, the views inland

were lovely indeed. Beautiful bays, secluded enough for the happy valley, opened continually, each having its estates or cluster of negro huts, backed by swelling green mountains, covered with emerald foliage, and said to abound with deadly serpents.

At nightfall, we had a good look at the Diamond Rock, so famous in the history of the wars of Martinique, between the French and English; and then we plunged into a sea of troubles, and by opposing, ended them. But what a night! We seemed, arrow-like, to dart under the waves, as they broke against our bark in quick succession. Our captain (Snaggs) groaned in spirit, as each sea made a palpable hit, causing our every timber to quiver. Our mouldy compass in the cabin, scarcely to be deciphered, was inspected again and again by each of the crew, all muttering an opinion, that "dis cumpus no wort noting."

We had run twice the twenty miles specified, yet no land was to be seen; and as it was of some importance to us all not to run over St. Lucia, matters began to look very serious. At length, the moon got up, and that set all right. We instantly altered our course several points, and the morning gun found us tacking about the mouth of Castries harbour; and a night of anxiety and peril gave place to a smooth sea and safety; but I internally vowed never to trust myself again with negroes.

The captain now attempted to practise another imposition upon me. This was, not to enter the harbour,

which is a mile deep; but to stand off and on, and signalize for a shore-boat, to take me up to the town—of course, at my expense. I was not disposed, however, to submit to this arrangement; and at length, on my agreeing to pay the harbour dues (one shilling and ten-pence), the knave consented to beat up to Castries. When boarded by the harbour-master, not a word was said of our visit to Martinique; but captain and crew stoutly asserted that they left Dominica on the previous day (Saturday morning, instead of Friday evening). Fortunately, I was not asked to confirm this statement, and did not consider it my business to volunteer information. Still I am afraid, on reflection, that the latter course would have been more proper.

Castries is perhaps the most barbarous negro town in the West Indies; for, as the whites are very few indeed, the coloured and black population assume an importance not known elsewhere. They consist, besides, of French negroes, the worst sort, as they are more clever, more cunning, and more knavish, than the pig-headed British negro.

Seen from the sea, the town presents some rather imposing-looking buildings, which, however, on landing, quickly subside into very common-place ones. The streets, which commence from a low quay, run at right angles with each other, and are very broad for the size of the place; but the grass grows in the interstices of the wretched pavement of round, ill-laid stones; so that the far-end of the town seems to be built on a meadow. Half a mile back from the sea,

the land breaks into ridges, swelling into secondary mountains. To the south, the long range of heights on which the garrison, Morne Fortuné, is built, eight hundred feet above the sea, blocks out any further view. On the north side of the bay, the land, though broken into hills, is much lower. The Government House, called the Pavilion, stands on an eminence one-third below the garrison. St. Lucia is furiously Roman Catholic; and the Protestant church is so far out of town, as to afford a good excuse to the lazy for not attending it.

I was recommended, in Dominica, to go to a certain *pension*, which turned out to be a regular negro house, only one degree above a negro hut. My landlady, two-thirds black, was sent for from mass; but the moment I saw her I felt assured that her *Pension* would not suit. She was dressed in the ultra style of a Martinique negress, wearing on her head an enormous chocolate-striped Madras. Barrel negress ear-rings hung from her ears, and her dress was a very short-bodied chemise and a striped petticoat. Her very brown bare legs were, in honour of Sunday, thrust into a pair of black velvet shoes, exchanged at home for a pair of slippers, such as a negress only could wear, her toes taking an airing out of each.

The first chamber to which I was shown was ten feet long, by about six in breadth, and furnished in the most wretched manner. For this, three shillings a-night were demanded. I was then shown her own bed-room; large indeed, but with doors and windows

all over; overlooked at every point by the hangers-on, male and female, with which negro establishments abound. The only article of furniture it contained was an enormous bedstead. For this room, a Spanish dollar, or 4*s*. 2*d*. a-night, was asked. As it was Sunday, and I was very much fatigued, I was fain to put up with it.

Fairly worn out, I tried, after a wretched breakfast, to sleep. Alas! it was impossible. A bevy of coloured women had stationed themselves under the window, and were jabbering and laughing like mad people. In addition to this abominable uproar, the eternal singing of the negro Jack-of-all-work murdered sleep.

I received a visit from a respectable storekeeper, to whom I had brought a letter, which had the effect of procuring me greater civility from my landlady, and of modifying her attempts at extortion; a consequence of her holding the post of washwoman to my new acquaintance.

There is an hotel, kept by Miss Betsey Parker; but as this grumpy mulatto asked two dollars a-day, or £12. 18*s*. 4*d*. a-month, for accommodation (making no difference for length of time), and was very short and disdainful in her answers, because I had not, in the first instance, given her house the preference, my negociation with her failed.

Unfortunately, the more decent part of the community in St. Lucia being ultra Roman Catholic, refuse to let even vacant parts of their houses to Protestants; so, after much search and trouble, I was

glad to get a room in the *barrac* of an enormously fat mulatto huckstress.

From the few strangers who visit this colony, St. Lucia is always one-third, often indeed one-half, dearer than the other islands. There is, however, much more sugar business doing than in Dominica; and on my arrival, three very fine West Indiamen were in the harbour, besides plenty of schooners, which chiefly carry firewood to Barbadoes. Castries is a wretched town, being a mere collection of negro-houses, interspersed here and there with a decent house over a store, and one or two shabby-looking government buildings.

On the 4th of June, I started from Castries for the Quartier de la Souffrière, and the town of that name, twenty miles south. Communication between the two places is carried on by pirogues, large canoes of seven tons burthen, with a crew of six men. They carry two masts, with sprit-sails, and seem to fly along, as the enormous sails sweep the water. They are at best but ticklish conveyances, and the greatest circumspection is necessary to meet the squalls which rush down every moment from the mountains. The sheets, always held in hand, are eased off; and "Attension" or "En haut," is the signal for two or more of the crew to jump up, in the midst of a noisy negro discussion, on the weather gunwale, to keep the pirogue, by their bodily weight, from upsetting. Profound silence prevails until the puff is past.

The beam of the canoe was pretty broad, but occa-

sionally, as she surged over, we shipped a lot of water, which rushed in over the lee gunwale, and it was necessary to keep baling it out with a calabash. What delicate work this was, sailors will understand, occurring as it did all the passage down, about every two minutes of two hours and a half. As I considered a boat without a keel, and with but little ballast, somewhat hazardous, I felt myself warranted in drawing a long breath now and then.

The crew worked on shares, and averaged a gain of two francs a-day. Although not uncivil, they showed not the slightest deference to their passengers, but wrangled and bawled at each other the whole time. To any one given to reflection, this incessant jabber is very distressing, and destroyed half the pleasure of the excursion.

The scenery along the coast of St. Lucia is very interesting. High peaks inland, beautiful valleys and headlands covered with stunted scrubby trees or bushes, succeed each other in uninterrupted succession. That the voyage is dangerous there can be no doubt, and, upon a huge bluff or headland, the *grand bénitier*, a niche containing an image of the Virgin is placed to receive the prayers or thanks of travellers. Here we doused our sails, with their bamboo sprits, and paddled the rest of th way.

Paradoxical as it may appear, negroes, though naturally horrible cowards, show in some things great temerity, as in shaving rocks so closely that the reflux of the sea alone sends the canoe off again. We soon

opened the pretty bay of Souffrière, with its compact little town; the huge cone of the Petit Piton bounding it to the south. The fare by pirogue is three mokos.

So anomalous is the West Indies, that, whilst Castries, the capital of St. Lucia, has only one tavern, the much smaller town of Souffrière has three, all tolerably good: I went to that of Madame Trime, a good-natured but very slow, dawdling mulatto. As usual in such houses, the place is full of coloured women and naked brown children.

The little town of Souffrière is on the beach of the bay, and is surrounded on three sides by an amphitheatre of mountains and wooded heights. There are two or three estates in the valley, and the population averages about two thousand. The coloured females of the better class are rather good-looking. As a drawback, however, they raise their voices very high in conversation, and are indeed so vehement as always to seem angry. The St. Lucia negroes and negresses are most coarse, brutal, and ferocious in manner—more so than those of any of the other islands.

As the rainy season was about to set in, and the Souffrière quarter is proverbially the rainy part of the island, I set off to see the Sulphur, a distance by the road of full three miles. The natives call it *un demi heure à cheval,* but up the mountain and down into the dell we found was a good hour's ride. Could we have gone direct, the Sulphur is not more than a mile from the town, but we had to make a *détour* round a long headland before turning east. The road

is rocky, and is not to be traversed without circumspection.

The first glimpse we caught of the crater, was that of an immense lime-pit far below us, creeping up the sides of a green mountain, the crown of which bristled with a stalwart forest. We soon heard the roar, and became sensible of the sulphureous steam.

I must now record a trait of kindness very uncommon in these parts. Close to the boundary of the Sulphur is the house of a Madame Nicolas; and to this I sent my guide for a bottle of wine, or anything else he could get me to drink. He returned with a bottle of most excellent *vin du côte*, for which I paid sixpence. Water, of course, we had to take also; for, pent in as we were between high hills, the heat was overpowering, and human nature could not stand the exhaustion without some stimulant. We crossed one or two miniature ravines and got upon the sulphur formation. It looked like chalk, but had a green and yellow tinge, with an awful smell, betraying its true character. It was not flat, but broken up in dire confusion, the treacherous soil being hot to the feet and evidently not to be trusted too far. In this chaos of broken ridges and hollows, were several pits of black water bubbling and roaring and throwing up positive fountains of boiling fluid, emitting clouds of hot steam with an intolerable stench: of these Stygian cauldrons there were seven or eight, of which we duly made the tour.

The Grande Chaudière is a pond about twenty feet in length by about twelve feet broad, and contained

five or six distinct cauldrons, all in the most furious ebullition. Here, as the wind blew the scalding steam in various directions, I was nearly stifled, and forced to turn away and to cover my face with my hands, to escape receiving in my lungs the pernicious blast. Fortunately it lasted only a few seconds, or it would certainly have been fatal.

I made the tour of these Chaudières twice. I could trace neither fire nor flame, but the guide said that sometimes these boiling fountains spouted much higher. The clouds of steam, the heated ground, and the crater itself, pent in between high hills, made the heat so great that I came away quite exhausted, and was glad to ascend to the regions of fresh air to lie under a tree and court the cool breeze. On reclaiming my horse, which had been put up at Madame H. Nicolas's, my guide informed me that a *déjeûner* of eggs with a sangaree, had been courteously prepared for me by the lady. I had, however, no opportunity of seeing her, and thanking her for her intended hospitality.

The Souffrière lies in a bowl, surrounded by hills evidently volcanic, although now covered to the top with trees. On one part was a little stone edifice, formerly used in the manufacture of alum.

We returned to the town greatly fatigued. Altogether, and particularly to novices, the crater of St. Lucia is worthy of a visit.

Subsequently we visited the *étangs*, or lakes, mentioned by Breen as supplying the crater with water.

They were both absolutely dry, grass and plantains growing in luxuriance over the bottoms, and cattle feeding therein. We must, therefore, look to some other source for the supply of water to the Chaudières.

I hired, for a dollar, a canoe with three men, to go round with an acquaintance to pay my respects to the Pitons, in their own beautiful little bay. These curious peaks rank amongst the lions of St. Lucia. By sea the journey is only half an hour's paddle, but by land it is five miles. Although not so high by thirty feet as the Gros Piton, the Petit Piton is the more picturesque of these singular cones. One vast rock shooting up two thousand six hundred and eighty feet, scantily covered with bushes, yet vertical enough to defy a monkey to climb, is a curious spectacle. To man, the mount is absolutely inaccessible. The story of the two sailors trying it and never coming back, is merely a negro's tale. No sailor ever was or would be foolish enough to attempt that which a glance would satisfy him was impossible. The stories of serpents, too, are greatly exaggerated.

The two Pitons are about a quarter of a mile apart. Their bases, washed on three sides by the waves, flank either side of the Anse des deux Pitons. This bay contains two estates; and the land which connects the two cones, rises to the height of six or seven hundred feet above the sea.

We walked over to the Union estate, belonging to Mr. Goodman, and were hospitably received by his son. The Union is at the back of the Gros Piton, and is

one of the few properties that make head against the ruinous policy of the mother country. The best sugar on the island is manufactured here. The mill is worked by water power.

The Gros Piton, two thousand seven hundred and ten feet high, has a path winding round it to its top. The apex is a great place for maroon parties, as it commands a magnificent view, whilst at night it is traversed in all directions by negroes with torches, hunting land-crabs. Serpents are also found here, and a negress on the estate was suffering from a bite received a week previously. On such occasions regular practitioners are never summoned, but the sufferer is attended by a negro doctor called a Penseur, who is very skilful in the application of herbs, and where an artery has not been punctured, is usually successful.

Large black scorpions abound here, and their bite is considered more dangerous even than that of a serpent. Mr. Goodman's younger brother had been bitten in the field only a week or so before we arrived, when he vomited for several hours, and for some days his life was despaired of. Even at the time of our visit, he was only slowly recovering. The Guaco di Vejuco, or serpent antidote, from South America, was introduced into St. Lucia, but it was said to have lost its efficacy when transplanted. At any rate, it is in disrepute with the negro doctors, and never used. In the previous year, a magistrate, whilst shooting in the woods, had lost his life in a few hours from the bite of a serpent. People have been bitten in the streets of Castries and

of Souffrière, and in the latter town, the Rev. Mr. Sinclair showed me a rat-tail serpent, the most deadly of all, that had been killed in his garden only a few days before. It sprang at one of his scholars; but fortunately missed the lad, when a negro killed it with a cutlass. The great danger arises from people not being always on the *qui vive:* if unseen by them, the serpent will allow them to pass, and then spring upon them from behind. If seen in time, it steals off.

A field labourer in St. Lucia gets from a shilling to fifteenpence a day, but as he is made to pay in proportion, he is no better off than the labourer at sixpence *per diem*, at St. Kitts or Dominica. Still, the planters of St. Lucia, in common with those of the other West India islands, are a ruined body. Mr. M——, who owns one-third of the island, was, at this movement involved in an inextricable mesh of difficulties.

I started in a shower of rain for Castries at two o'clock in the morning, which delectable hour is selected on account of the cool air and the calm sea, and also in order to arrive at six A.M. It was necessary to row all the way, sailing being too dangerous. There is much rivalry between the various large pirogues, which number about fifteen; and as negroes never reflect, and do not understand the value of quiet, our crew and another united in loud and harsh chorusses to tunes used in shipping sugar. Occasionally they stood up like galley-slaves, and then sank down on the thwarts, to give a greater impetus to the stroke; this

movement was accompanied by a "whishe" that sounded like the blowing of a grampus.

Castries is a wretched place for a stranger. There are no amusements, and the inhabitants are shy, living quite by themselves. I peeped into a small colonial library, which seemed to contain well-selected books, but no one made me an offer of an introduction to it. The whole town, which is unworthy of observation, may be traversed in half an hour. The opening which Breen rather pompously calls the Place d'Armes, is a shabby green, surrounded by negro houses, and having in its centre a conduit of water, which it would require the poetry of Coleridge to call a fountain. To the north of Castries lies the swamp which formerly rendered the town so unhealthy, and does so even now. It was, however, at the time of my visit, being filled up, government intending to purchase the land and sell it out in lots—a very wise plan if carried into execution. There are still many valleys and villages in the island in which no white man can live.

Breen wonders "that a greater number of strangers do not visit St. Lucia." Would the attraction be the sociability of its inhabitants, who are not civil even to the military (who, by the way, loathe the station as a banishment)? Is its unhealthiness any inducement? or its serpents? or its insolent negro population? My own opinion is, that St. Lucia must long remain a *terra incognita* to the civilized world. It will sink by degrees into the mere lair of the negro, and scarcely be missed.

I heard from a special constable who was in the thick of it, something about the riot of the 5th of March, 1849. It appears, that amongst the negroes there was an organized plan to rise simultaneously all over the island; but the black population of the Castries quarter, mistook the day, which so far neutralized the intended mischief, namely, the burning of estates, ending, probably, in a massacre of the whites. All this was projected in the belief that the military were only playthings, and would never really act against them, and that, do what they might, Queen Victoria would never suffer negroes to be punished. This idea, so fraught with danger to the whites, once getting into the craniums of negroes, was only dissipated by the volleys which, after the most extraordinary forbearance on the part of the magistracy and the soldiery, who were dreadfully cut by the glass bottles thrown at them, showed the blacks under what a delusion they laboured. By the special report, nine negroes were killed, but it is well known that many more bit the dust, and were carried off by their friends, and, in fear, privately buried. Numbers were also wounded, but it was not deemed politic to make many inquiries. The diabolical plot was instigated by runaway negroes from Martinique. The conduct of the magistrate and the officer commanding the troops, Captain Smith, of the 54th, and of the governor, Mr. Darling, appears to have been most exemplary.

Some of the views from the heights, two or three miles south of Castries, are surpassingly beautiful,

commanding the splendid range of the Piton de Canaries and Morne Parasol mountains, and the intermediate valleys, which teem with a luxuriance quite incomprehensible to the inhabitants of a northern climate. The garrison of Morne Fortuné overlooks this delightful prospect.

Castries is particularly distinguished for the number of its lepers, who, covered with sores, roam the streets. They are generally afflicted in addition with elephantiasis, and their feet are bound up in filthy rags. These poor creatures are very fond of sitting on the door-steps, which in small houses open into the sitting room. They are like most negroes, very impudent, and will refuse to go away when requested; nor was it until I went to the police-office that one of them would move. Drunken negroes, and the numberless idiots with which West India towns abound, form, with the lepers, a large item in the population of St. Lucia.

CHAPTER XIV.

RETURN TO DOMINICA—SECOND VISIT TO PRINCE RUPERT'S BAY—THE RAINY SEASON—UNPRINCIPLED LAWYERS—JUDGE WOODCOCK—DEPARTURE FOR ANTIGUA — ENGLISH HARBOUR — ST. JOHN'S—THE MARKET—SHOCK OF EARTHQUAKE—GUY FAWKES' DAY—CLARE HALL—NEGRO AND COLOURED POPULATION.

On the 12th of June, at four P.M., we left St. Lucia for Dominica; and after a boisterous run, in a sloop of eight tons, arrived at Roseau by noon next day. Our captain, a white man from Anguilla, called himself an Englishman and hated everything French. Yet he had never been out of the West Indies, and spoke a very singular dialect, all but negro: "I tink," "my fader," &c. The Virgin Islands, surely, must have been settled by cockneys, as the "vere," "vy," "vot," is used by all classes; and it was rather amusing to hear a son of the captain sing a sentimental ballad:

> "I could not valk, I could not veep,
> I vou'd not anguerish my mudder."

On the 15th of June, I went again to Prince

Rupert's Bay, to stay with Dr. M——, at the dilapidated barracks, and very quickly felt the effects of the miasma, from the fatal swamp to the E.N.E. of the garrison. It is right in the "wind's eye," and scarcely a quarter of a mile distant. In my case it produced an incessant drowsiness, and so great a prostration of strength, that I could with difficulty drag one leg after another. The swamp intersects a peninsula, which forms the northern headland of the bay, Prince Rupert's Point, and may be from a quarter to half a mile in breadth. Canals have been cut through it, in a futile attempt to drain it, but the land not being above the level of the sea, drainage is impossible. The malaria is so deadly, that several black soldiers, who had had plots of marsh given them to cultivate for their own private advantage, died from its effects. Yet the power of the negro to resist miasma, which would kill any white man, is well known.

The scenery of Prince Rupert's Bay is exquisite. The *ci-devant* town of Portsmouth is at present but a wretched little negro village, having only two miniature stores supplied from Roseau. The so-called tomb of Prince Rupert, who is said to have died in the bay, is still on the beach.

The rainy season commenced on July 9th. Of late years this pluvial period had been so uncertain in Dominica, as to defy calculation as to when it would take place. There is nothing of the dull atmosphere of a settled rainy day in Europe, but *au contraire*, the rain descends in torrents, and ranges along the moun-

tains, when the sky beyond is clear and blue. We have, in fact, a succession of violent rain-squalls, furious enough whilst they last, but clearing away at intervals, and showing the most exquisite "tones," as in succession the showers bring each mountain ridge into delicate relief. I know of nothing in its way more lovely or charming.

The rainy season brings out the lizards in great numbers. The male lizard has a transparent membranous pouch of a yellowish colour under the throat, and which the animals can inflate at will; as, with his brilliant eye, and head partly cocked on one side, he studies you with an intensity truly ludicrous. He comes into your chamber, and eyes the progress of your toilette with the most profoundly philosophical attention. By no means timid, he trusts for escape to his well-known power of assimilation of colour to any object he may be near; and, generally speaking, it is not until you actually touch him, that he makes off. One of these harmless little reptiles was so immovable, and so perfectly the colour of some black rotten wood on which he rested, that in spite of form, and, as I thought, a brilliant eye, I could not be certain what he was till I touched him with a switch, when he withdrew a dozen inches or so but to advance and resume his scrutiny the moment I retired. Of this, however, there can be no doubt, that the whole of the lizard tribe have the power equally with the chameleon, of assimilating themselves to the colour of whatever

substance they happen to be upon, of course for the purpose of concealment.

Leprosy amongst the old white creole families is as common in the West Indies, as scrofula in Scotland or Ireland; few indeed are free from it. All sorts of stories are, of course, invented, to conceal the loathsome malady from the world, or to lead the stranger off the real track; but leprosy will be found, in all its horrors, among the whites. I believe, also, that all the coloured people are more or less tainted with it, whilst the white blotches, carbuncles and elephantiasis of the negro defy concealment. This is one of the most serious objections to contracting marriages with even white creoles. I saw the children of a white family, visiting Prince Rupert's Bay, covered with sores, which eruption, I was told by the mother, proceeded from the children having scratched the bites of the *bête rouge* until they inflamed; but, on inquiry, I found that the disease was neither more nor less than leprosy, which, in various phases, affected the whole maternal family. The mother was a white creole, of French extraction.

Dominica is a frightfully litigious island. One half of Roseau live by going to law with the other. The reason is this: two of the leading lawyers are disgraced and degraded men, utterly without principle, and a body of coloured men have entered their offices as clerks, merely to obtain a knowledge of the chicanery of the law, to learn only how to profit by the folly or

passions of the blacks and mulattoes, and they seek out and foment every possible subject of litigation. The negroes are encouraged to break the law by offers of protection, or to practise extortion by the certainty of being upheld. These facts are too well known to all in Dominica to be refuted. The consequence is, that the most preposterous and extortionate charges are made by the coloured tradespeople, and if resisted, the law is brought into play, and whatever you may save from a fraudulent bill is sure to find its way into the pockets of your advocate; so that, all things considered, it is better to pay the demand at once, and spare yourself all subsequent trouble and annoyance.

A sketch of the characters of two West Indian lawyers, with their *modus operandi*, will scarcely fail to be interesting, as showing the class of persons in authority in the British colonies.

B—— was formerly a public law officer, but his conduct was so disgraceful that he was turned out of his office, and declared incapable of ever again holding a public post. He then left for another island, where, from his insolent assumption—his practice of fostering every chance of litigation, his oppression and vindictiveness in following up to their utter ruin all who offended him—he raised such a tumult as made the place too hot for him, and he forthwith beat a retreat to his first residence. There, from the terror his very name inspired, he soon took the lead, making work for himself by means that in England would strike him off the rolls in a month. The negroes and coloured people, whom

he encourages in all sorts of extortion and insolence, are perfectly at his beck. His *modus operandi* is much as follows:—an acquaintance is made with a new-comer, who is but too glad to receive civility from strangers, and finds himself well treated with wine, &c., and the conversation is carried on in a free and easy manner, even to joviality; but all the time the visitor is skilfully cross-questioned as to his family at home, their wealth, and his prospects, so as to ascertain what chance there is of his friends in England being able or willing to get him out of any scrape he may fall into. If this preliminary investigation be satisfactory, his opinions of those he happens to know *in situ* are quickly elicited, to be made use of as a source of profit in an action for slander. If ascertained to be a "fatted calf," insults from negroes or coloured people quickly result. The aggressor gets threatened or kicked, almost as a matter of course, when an action for damages results, and also, as a matter of course, Mr. B—— is retained as counsel, when a coloured jury award damages so excessive, as no English court would for a moment think of.

For the military service, or those connected with it, the matter is worse; English gentlemen, especially military men, are not accustomed to be insulted by vagabonds with impunity, and are apt to be summary in their resentments; consequently they (as they cannot escape payment) are made to suffer shamefully, because the coloured jury hate a white gentleman, and gloat over the idea of being able to punish him. This disgraceful state of

things is well known, and commonly discussed in Dominica; but England is far off, and an unprincipled lawyer is difficult to convict. The public and private life of one of our principal crown lawyers in the West Indies is so utterly disgraceful that it shuts him out of all respectable society; yet this modern Tiberius aspires to a judgeship.

Another evil results from the class of coloured men who, practising as attorneys to negroes, have a smattering of all the faulty parts of the law. They sedulously attend every defendant brought up before the stipendiary magistrates, and if their self-constituted client be convicted, no matter how justly, they are prompt to urge the poor ignorant wretch to bring an action against the magistrate! This advice, as negroes and coloured people are dreadfully prone to litigation, is readily embraced. The poor victim is of course defeated, but the coloured lawyer gets his fee as counsel for the plaintiff, which is all he cares for. As a consequence, the magistrates of Dominica are frightened to convict, and to escape the chance of an action, prefer letting the delinquent off.

It is, perhaps, but right to add, that the present Chief Justice of Dominica, Mr. Woodcock, was much respected in St. Kitts, and that his respectability has done something to correct the previous villainy and corruption which characterised the law here.

From the spirit of litigation, fostered for their own ends by a disreputable bar, there are scarcely three families in Dominica on visiting terms.

The deterioration in character of the negroes was well described to me by an old Italian gentleman, Andrea Rossi, who has been forty-three years in Dominica, and who has witnessed all the changes for the worse resulting from emancipation. "Formerly," said he, "in the time of slavery, the negroes were quiet and respectful, and both Catholics and Protestants were infinitely more religious than at present. Now they are rude and insolent to a degree, bearding the whites; and no one dare speak a word of reproof to them, for any rascality they may commit, without being abused. They are fast becoming savages." This is a sad picture, but unquestionably a true one. Signor Rossi mentioned also a curious fact, that many planters of Dominica had sold their estates, and gone to settle in Cuba. No one here doubts that in a very few years the whites and coloured people will be ousted altogether; and that, *à la* St. Domingo, the blacks will usurp the West Indian islands. Should this be allowed, and barbarism be permitted to advance from Africa—four thousand miles? For the sake of that civilization which the philanthropists seem so anxious to promote, the wrong way—we hope not.

As for civilizing negroes, beyond what coercion will effect, it is a chimera too ludicrous for any one acquainted with their character to indulge. They have not the elements of civilization in them, as a proof of which, the first use they have made of liberty has been to return to barbarism!

I set off on September 5th, 1850, at three P.M., from

Dominica, in a "bull jumper," or cattle vessel, for Antigua; paying for my passage five dollars and finding myself. Our vessel was a beautiful schooner of eighty tons, running between the Oronoco and the British islands with cattle, to supply the government contracts of Messrs. Cavan and Co. The 'Agnes' had been a slaver, and sailed like a witch; for, in spite of light winds, we arrived at Falmouth Harbour by dusk on the evening of the 7th, after a run of one hundred and eighteen miles. We were boarded by the Queen's pilot, who worked the vessel with admirable precision through the intricate reefs which intersect the harbour. It was dark before we were half in, and it was a close shave for us more than once. Indeed, we heard the waves breaking over the reefs with great violence. I got on shore at nine P.M., and went to the only hotel, kept by Richardson, a very civil white man, clerk to the storekeeper of the dockyard at English Harbour, close to the house.

The approach to Antigua from the southward differs very materially from anything that I had heard or read of. I had understood it to be a low flat island, but little raised above the sea. In reality it is fenced round by immense dusky-green headlands. The term precipices, which is commonly used, would convey a very erroneous impression of their character. They are rather mountains, bold in outline and volcanic in their forms, and, although none rise above thirteen hundred feet, their sides, serried into ravines by ancient streams of lava, give them all the grandeur of moun-

tains of far greater height, a delusion assisted by their dark green vegetation. The ridge on which the garrison is built is four hundred feet above the sea. Nor is Antigua flat anywhere. It is essentially a "rolling" country, with some tough hills to mount. Its undulating interior plains, or downs, are covered with grass, and but sparsely dotted with trees. Indeed, were it not a tropical country, the interior of Antigua would be considered bleak. The centre of the island is generally lower than its mountain ramparts.

At English Harbour there is a dockyard, which, during my stay, was so strictly tabooed by the captain of the frigate 'Alarm,' stationed there, that civilians were not allowed to enter it.

Falmouth, which is the little town or village of English Harbour, is at the inconvenient distance of eleven miles from St. John's, the capital. There is an omnibus on the road, but it is only brought into play when the steamer arrives, so I was obliged to hire a cart to take my somewhat heavy baggage over the city, for which I was charged eleven shillings. Not wishing to give three dollars more for a negro's Rosinante, I determined to proceed to Falmouth on foot. "You nebber do it, Sar," said my negro on hearing my resolution: "de sun too hot; it kill you." However, I walked five miles and a half over some stiff hills before the cart overtook me. The sun was indeed very hot, and the tug up the hill to the church of All Saints, in ruins through the hurricane of 1848, was a most trying one. Here I found a store, and three-parts of

a bottle of porter which I was so fortunate as to procure formed a valuable adjunct in sustaining my waning energies. I could have walked the rest of the way, but was persuaded to mount the cart, and, perched in the midst of my chattels, I rode almost into the city. The route was extremely uninteresting, being a series of undulating downs, barren of all but grass, which gave a very bare and monotonous character to the scene. It was dreary and wild, without a trace of the romantic. The grass was without luxuriance, and the country seemed to be without inhabitants. Nearing the city, we saw perched on an eminence the Moravian church at Lebanon, the architecture of which had more pretension than dissenting temples usually display. At last we sighted St. John's, with its grey-roofed houses, its bay and its cathedral, the latter overlooking the city from a very prominent position.

From the general absence of cocoa-nut trees, cabbage palms and forests, Antigua has but little, barring the fierce sun, to remind one of the Tropics. Although its streets are wide and spacious, crossing each other at right angles, St. John's has the anomalous character of all West Indian towns—long, low, unpainted wooden houses, weather stained and dilapidated, interspersed with compact wooden mansions, neatly painted white with green *jalousies*. The general effect is extremely disagreeable, the good houses not being sufficiently near each other to redeem the other.

The lion of St. John's, to my taste, is the cathedral, an extremely imposing and handsome structure of very

white freestone. It has been objected that the windows are far too small, but in all hot countries—in ancient Greece, modern Italy, Spain, &c., small windows have been considered necessary to exclude the heat. Besides, this structure is adapted to withstand an earthquake. Now All Saints Church on the hill, already spoken of, was far too slightly built, and, being damaged by an earthquake, was easily overthrown by a hurricane. The interior of the cathedral is lined with pitch pine, so that, in the event of another catastrophe, the stones may not fall inward on the congregation—a precaution of very doubtful efficacy. The building has one grand desideratum, a large clock, on which, co-important with the figures, "Dent, London," glares with more than tropical fierceness—an advertisement in very bad taste. However, a public clock of any kind, in a country where not one watch in fifty is in working order, is a great advantage. Watchmakers in the British islands are generally wretched pretenders. A good workman, really master of his trade, would make a comfortable living in almost any of them.

There is one nuisance in Antigua, which makes St. John's resemble one of the worst Turkish towns—this is the plague of dogs. Each negro-hut contains at least one long-eared, mangy, half-starved cur, which at night is driven into the streets or roads, where numbers congregate—yelling, barking, and fighting amongst themselves, besides baying in packs every unfortunate wayfarer. I never knew so disturbed a city at night as St. John's; but though all feel the

evil, no one stirs to abate it. Danger there unquestionably is in allowing it to prevail. One morning, on an expedition to the country, I turned out at four o'clock, quite dark, when I was beset by a pack of yelping dogs, who completely encircled me, and I escaped from them with great difficulty. Now, when it is considered that one bite from any of these curs might have produced hydrophobia, I think such things still demand the interference of the authorities.

One of the drollest cries in St. John's is from huckstering children, who at night perambulate the town, with "Candles, ladies" (meaning negroes) "a penny a-piece;" "Matches, ladies, a penny a box." Without this flattering *soubriquet* of "ladies," the small merchant would have no chance of vending his wares.

The day's pay for field labour in Antigua is sixpence, for either man or woman, but in crop-time goes up as high as ten-pence; but the negroes say that it pays better (*i. e.* not such hard work) to plant trees, of which Antigua is much in want. Of the charges of town negroes, some idea may be formed from an old fellow receiving from me eight-pence a-piece for setting razors badly!

St. John's boasts a very fine subscription library, where most of the choice books of the season, with the newspapers and periodicals, may be found. It is somewhat aristocratic; in fact, a sort of club; but respectable strangers are very liberally introduced for

three months. The subscription is rather a heavy one.

There is a second library, the Wesleyans', quite in its infancy, but containing some good books. The subscription is very trifling. Of course, in this there are no introductions for strangers. It is chiefly frequented by mechanics and persons of that class.

The market of St. John's, for so refined a city, is most wretched—not better than what would be found in every filthy village on the Nile. Squalid negresses squat before a dirty rag, on which is spread a dozen okres, a few damaged onions, tanniers, yams, &c., a pumpkin or two, or a barrrel of maryoc farina doled out with a tea-cup, or a small tray of dirty bay salt, or a dozen rotten red herrings or salted mackarel, from Nova Scotia. Little pieces of veal or pork are displayed on wretched stalls; and the coloured butchers, when not serving customers, beat the nigger-tattoo on the meat, *pour tuer le temps*. Add to this, in a tropical sun, fish covered with flies, and garbage of all sorts, while mangy dogs prowl about; and the sickening combination of smells fills the stranger with utter disgust. Such a scene may be more easily conceived than described.

The fruits of Antigua, melons excepted, are only fit for negroes. As there are no forests in the island, the upper part of the market is appropriated to charcoal-sellers, or venders of miserable bundles of twigs, which do duty for firewood; all other supplies are

extremely precarious. Occasionally, oysters, crabs and shrimps (for so craw-fish, four inches long, are called), are brought in; and if you happen to fall in with the vender, perhaps he might take the trouble to carry them to your house, but generally speaking you must do this for yourself.

"Have you many craw-fish your way?" I inquired of a stout young negro.

"Yes, Sar—plenty, plenty; but nobody trouble to catch um."

Now, as these shrimps are as large as young lobsters, and six or eight, caught in half an hour, will bring a shilling, or furnish a sumptuous meal, and are bought with avidity, one may imagine how well off the negroes are. In truth, sturdy young fellows will lounge about the wharves all day, realizing only fourpence or sixpence, when a walk of a mile or two to the nearest rivulet would, for an hour's labour, bring them in two shillings or half-a-crown. These rivulets are never more than a foot deep, purling over stones under which the cray-fishes lurk in abundance, and are readily taken by the hand. The streams are free to any one who chooses to fish; but negroes will idle about, and swindle, cheat, and steal for that subsistence which they might obtain comfortably by a little labour.

On Tuesday, October 29th, at four A.M., there was a shock of earthquake. I happened to be awake, and for the second time heard the noise, and thought it to

be a squall of wind, till the bed began to quiver, the beams to crack a little, and the glasses on the sideboard, in the sitting-room, to jingle; when I felt convinced that it must be an earthquake, a fact confirmed the next morning. The vibrations lasted a minute or two.

The Antiguans boast very much of the superior civilization of their negroes, and the country negroes, if not civilized, are at least civil. The "How do, massa?" (or "Sar,") with the touch of the hat or the bob from the female, makes a very favourable impression on the stranger. The St. John's negroes were amongst the most turbulent and insubordinate of the whole, until the establishment of the most stringent, best appointed, and efficient police in the British West Indies, by which they are kept in their proper place.

As far as details go, amongst the drollest establishments of the West Indies, are the "mico schools," founded by some old lady with more money than wit. One of these institutions is within a hundred yards of me. Singing seems to be the grand feature, and I hear the children singing in chorus half the day. Pious ejaculations are accompanied by the drollest tunes. As a specimen, I may mention one of the St. Vincent melodies:

> "Holy Bible, book divine, tural-ural, tural-ural,
> Precious, precious, thou art mine, tural-ural, tural-ural."

The tune was "Bonnie laddie, sodger laddie."

"A boat, a boat unto the ferry," is another infantile chorus, whilst the children promenade round the school-room.

When the children were dismissed, the seminary was attended by adult teachers from seven P.M. until nine o'clock, and then I had the benefit of the full choir. "Here's a health to all good lasses," was a favourite glee. Coloured ladies as teachers joined the class, and gave the "Canadian Boat Song."

In Antigua, as elsewhere, in spite of the humbug talked about education, the coloured people are a miserable set. They speak wretched English, and you cannot have any transactions with even the best of them, without their attempting to impose upon you in some way or other. To read sound improving works would trouble their mental faculties too much, though they are quick enough to pick up a smattering of any subject by listening to others. In domestic life, they are a dawdling, make-shift, apathetic, and most unreflective people. A wet towel will be laid over your clean shirt, and a heavy pile of books over your note-papers or drawings, of course crushing everything beneath. Nothing is ever done without evincing the want of discretion. In mechanics, upholstery, &c., no improvement has been made on furniture fashioned seventy years ago. All is rough, coarse, and badly finished, whilst, so astounding is their vanity and conceit, that a hint at any improvement is held to be most insulting, and is met by dogged sullenness, if not muttered imper-

tinence. They are in truth a most disagreeable race, and are quarrelsome and spiteful in the last degree. So inquisitive is their disposition, that a perfect system of *espionage* is usually established upon you, from which you are never safe. Whilst calling on President Shortland at Nevis, we were joined in the drawing-room by a party of his friends, six or eight in number, and during the whole of our visit two coloured servant-girls were ensconced in an angle outside the room, listening to our conversation. When they found themselves observed by me, they withdrew their heads for a moment or two, but the spreading flounces betrayed that they were still at the door. But this is not the worst of it. Conversation amongst whites in the West Indies generally turns on the black and coloured population, which remarks, with all sorts of exaggeration, are detailed by the listeners all over the town and do great mischief. In Antigua, whilst I was conversing with two ladies in their own house, a black girl was listening behind the *jalousie* of the door and heard everything that passed. At Jones's, the Red Lion inn, at St. Kitts, a regular system of *espionage*, as bad as that of Austria, is kept up by the negro waiters, one of whom was excessively insolent on my detecting and reproving him. This offensive trait in the black and coloured tribes is the most difficult to be borne by Europeans.

The negroes have another most disagreeable propensity, namely, a habit of following close at your heels

through the streets in a sort of Indian file, or walking very close alongside of you, making audible comments on your appearance to his companions. They are also pertinacious beggars. I cannot wonder at Europeans getting disgusted by degrees with the negro character. You never grow to like them. Young mulattoes also are usually offensively ill-bred, and impertinently familiar and insolent if reproved.

On November 5th, a ludicrous attempt was made to keep up the Protestant festival of Guy Fawkes day. A large moor outside the town called the Government Ground, was the site of the most miserable attempt at pyrotechnics that the world ever witnessed. The squibs were mere wild-fires, emitting a few sparks for a few moments, and then not exploding. The rockets serpentined about ten yards in *alto*, and then, as if satisfied with the attempt, slewed round, darted down to the ground and went out. One item of the fun was a half butter firkin filled with inflammable substances, carried on the head of some adventurous youth until too hot to hold, when it was flung down and trampled out. A range of women selling morbee, mangoes, and other negro dainties, lined the road, each with her attenuated negro candle in a candle-box turned to leeward; and I may here observe that a negro candle, scarcely better than an old rushlight, is perhaps the most wasteful luminary in existence.

The favourite employment of the negro is huckstering. To labour, involves exertion, but to wander

through the town selling morbee, or one pound of negro candles in retail, or two boxes of lucifers, or one bottle of cane-juice vinegar carried on the head, is rather a pastime than otherwise, so: "Wa-ant any candles," "Wa-ant any vinegar," are common cries. "Wa-ant any coo-als," the coals carried in a basket on the head is another.

It is very rare that a negro keeps a shop, though coloured men often do; whilst the aim of every Portuguese is, as soon as possible, to set up a liquor store.

The negro has no ambition to work his way up. He would be a prince could he attain the dignity without trouble, but he will not make an effort to be even one step above the lowest class. He will cheat and steal and swindle wherever it is possible, but he will not work, if he can by any chance avoid it.

Antigua, however unpromising at first sight, boasts much picturesque and even lovely scenery. The view from Clare Hall, the seat of the bishop, is very varied, pastoral, and beautiful, whilst, in traversing the mountains to the south towards the valley, constituting the rectory of the Rev. I. Curton, of renowned hospitality, I think I never saw scenes so varied and each exquisitely beautiful, in so short a space of time—scenes vieing with the finest views in Dominica or St. Vincent. The great sight in Antigua is Fig-tree Hill.

The north side of Antigua, or Pope's Head division, is considered the most fertile. It is an undulating, somewhat rough, but picturesque tract, the houses of

the different estates standing like feudal castles each on its own height, surrounded by bristling canes instead of spears. This tract, running parallel with the sea, is cut off from St. John's by a range of low hills. The island is singular amongst the Antilles by not having a single river, but only a few purling streamlets a foot or two deep.

Antigua is one of the hottest islands in the West Indies, in consequence probably of the absence of trees. It has one singular nuisance for the Tropics, the plague of domestic flies, in addition to mosquitoes.

All the better classes are on the verge of insolvency, particularly those who have been so unwise as to invest money, otherwise gained, in sugar estates; whilst, being fond of display, most of them live beyond their incomes. It is a very dry island, and, when rain does fall, it has the peculiarity of being very partial, so that some estates get a bountiful supply and flourish, whilst others are burnt up and only yield perhaps half crops.

Antigua is sometimes visited by yellow fever, which, however, usually confines itself to the troops. Its salubrity is lauded by the inhabitants, but it is sufficiently unhealthy to strangers, who quickly get fever and ague, the sun being very fierce and the easterly sea breeze very piercing. Many temperate men, on joining their regiments at the Ridge, die within the first week or two. My own experience is, that I was attacked with fever, ague, and dysentery combined, during the first fortnight; but, thanks to the skill of

Dr. Nicholson, the leading physician, I recovered sooner than I expected.

Want of humanity is a prominent characteristic of the coloured tribes. An instance of this occurred under my own notice. A poor young Scotchman was brought on shore from a ship in the last stage of consumption—absolutely in a dying state—and got lodgings in our house. On either side of us were the wooden tenements of coloured people, or negroes; and although each tenement of this class is detached, it is often not more than four feet apart from the next, and being full of windows, every sound in the adjacent house is most distinctly heard. One evening two coloured women, with their brother, in a house four feet from ours, began, for amusement only, to sing Methodist hymns, at the top of their loud wiry voices, to which was added all the horrible inflections and cadences, peculiar to the Conventicle. This yelling commenced about seven o'clock in the evening, to the great discomfiture of every one within hearing; and at nine the poor dying man was so disturbed by the noise, that his young wife sent a civil message to state the case, and to beg them to desist. What would any human being expect to be the result? It was an insolent message, to say that "the house was their own, and they had a right to make what noise they liked in it;" and forthwith they began absolutely to yell and scream their hymns, until they actually set all the dogs in the neighbourhood barking. And this fiend-like annoy-

ance was continued out of sheer devilry, interspersed with bursts of laughter, until ten o'clock at night. The unfortunate gentleman died two days afterwards. The doors and windows, close to the ground, were all open, and the young widow was in great distress at her bereavement, when a negress rushed out of the yard, with a scream of laughter, shouting: "He dead! he dead!" of course in the hearing of the widow.

I consider the black population of Antigua the most inhuman of all the islands. Their impudent familiarity is something astounding. "Me good as Queen Victoria," said a huge ugly negress in my hearing. "Me good as Prince Albert," was the remark of a fiendish-looking negro. All this would be simply laughable, but for the mischief which such doctrines produce. It is perfectly well understood here, that the stipendiary magistrates send lying reports to England, merely to chime in with the popular humbug at home about negroes, and so to retain their situations. The last person, of many whom I heard make this remark, was a gentleman of great talent, who had filled some of the highest offices of the law. The "stipes," as they are called, are, indeed, the most useless drones of all who fill colonial appointments.

No visitor can realize the barbarism of the West Indies, until he has been ill in a lodging-house, kept by coloured people. The absence of anything like European comforts, and the apathy and dawdling habits of the coloured creoles, exceed belief.

Murray's "Sierra Leone," in the Colonial Library, will give the faintest possible idea of the feelings and habits of blacks, domestic or otherwise. In the West Indies, to all this, is added insolence in full blow.

Of the four coloured daughters in the house in which I was living, three were tolerably well-looking, but the fourth, the darkest and eldest, had all the characteristics of the negro. Bad temper is so distinguishing a trait of the negro character, that a coloured lady of Dominica, a woman very superior to the generality of her class, remarked in my hearing, on seeing her child in her paroxysm: "Ah! there shows the black blood."

Had Coleridge been five years in the West Indies, instead of six months, he would have found plenty of rheumatism, for it is a very prevalent complaint here. The liver becomes affected, more or less, in every one, and the mucus membrane of the stomach is inflamed and destroyed by peppers and other stimulants. The sun is fierce, and the prevalent winds from north to south-east most piercing. Hence rheumatism to those predisposed; besides which, rheumatic people are instantly affected by any excess of electricity in the atmosphere, which, out here, is a frequent occurrence. A week of furious north-east winds is sometimes accompanied by violent rains, thunder, and lowering clouds, charged with electricity. In me, these visitations produced a fit of ague every time I stirred out, with excruciating rheumatic pains, so that often at eleven o'clock in the forenoon I was obliged to go to

bed, and lie shaking there for four or five hours. Profuse—and of course very weakening—perspiration would follow. When the bad weather cleared off, I would suddenly get well. Still I can understand a martyr to chronic rheumatisms, resulting from a bad system, like Coleridge's, recovering the use of his limbs in a very short period. The mere change to the Tropics would effect that—for a time.

Antigua, from its dryness and its want of shelter from the piercing winds, is a very bad island for consumptive people. In December we had many cases of fever and dysentery, and few escaped. I heard a negress say in the street, "eberybody hab de feber." Antigua is by no means a healthy island.

In four months, I had two idiot negro lads of seventeen as attendants. This will give some idea of the quota of intellect possessed by a negro population. The greater part at least are only half-witted, and I never yet met with a thoroughly sensible one. The other day, a negro knowing perfectly well that I was a mere bird of passage, brought me a marble slab, in the hope that I would become its purchaser: a nice little curiosity for a carpet-bag!

CHAPTER XV.

VISIT TO BARBUDA—HIGHLAND HOUSE—MAN-OF-WAR ISLAND—HUNTING WILD CATTLE—TWO-FEET BAY—DARBY'S CAVE—CASTLE HILL HOUSE—SPANISH POINT CASTLE—NEGRO FESTIVITIES.

On Friday, December 13th, I set off at noon for Barbuda, an island the private property of Sir W. Codrington, and almost a *terra incognita*. Indeed, it cannot be visited without permission from the attorney or agent in Antigua, which, in my case, was very courteously accorded by the Hon. Colonel Byam.

Barbuda lies thirty-six miles north of Antigua, and the drogher makes the passage in from five to eight hours. We threaded the frightful reefs which surround it, a nervous operation, but skilfully managed by moonlight by our pilots. I should observe that the island is so low as to be scarcely visible twelve miles off.

We landed on a beach of dazzling white sand, on which there is a fort and store-house—at this late hour

abandoned by the watchmen—so that as no signal could be made, we had to walk three miles and a half on a very bad road, partly through a swamp, to Codrington Town, as the small village is called which constitutes the capital of the island. We arrived at ten P.M., and fortunately found Mr. Panton, the overseer, still up. We got some hot coffee and rum, and a sofa for the night, having for chums on the floor, however, three negro boys, the domestics of the overseer, who was himself suffering from fever and ague, the orthodox malady of these islands.

Mr. Godwin, the manager, called next morning, and offered us the use of the turret, a room detached from his house—a snug, sequestered bed-chamber, as quiet and rural as one could desire. As Barbuda produces only venison, wild guinea-birds, turtle, and fish, visitors make a point of taking over salt provisions, such as ham, ling, fish, tongues, &c., with a stock of wine, ale, and other liquids.

On the following day we went on an excursion with Mr. Panton on horseback, through the bush about four miles, to the Highland House. Our track lay through a country, pretty thickly wooded with stunted bushes and small trees, interspersed here and there with groups of the columnar cactus, and huge aloes. The bush abounds with wild cattle, the staple of the island; but we saw none, as they invariably fly on scenting man. Occasionally we sprung a leash of wild guinea-birds, a group of semi-wild turkeys, or a family of half-wild hogs, black as coals, and bristling at our intrusion.

The prickly cashew (acacia) is so common, that the Barbudians wear, as a protection, thick leathern hats, like those of a fireman, and have their legs defended by anti-gropolists, or buck-skin splatterdashes. The cashew is in truth a very troublesome tree. The paths through this half common, half forest, are very intricate, so that a guide thoroughly conversant with the island is indispensable.

The highlands of Barbuda rise two hundred and five feet above the level of the sea; and from the Highland House (a ruin from hurricane and earthquakes) a good view of the island may be obtained. From this spot the lower country appears to be a compact mass of forest, or rather jungle, terminated west by a shallow lagoon, about four miles broad by ten in length. Barbuda is a mass of coral rock, scantily covered with coarse grass. On the north and east of the island, there are many wild sheep and hogs.

On the Sunday I went to church. There are only two white families on the island besides the overseer's, and these were the manager's and the clergyman's, so that the bulk of the congregation was negro, brown, or yellow. The Barbudian negroes are a fine race after their kind. The service was well performed by the Rev. Mr. Culpepper, who also preached an excellent sermon, well adapted to the limited comprehension of the mass of his hearers—the already far too long a service was, however, tediously lengthened by the whole of the christening service being gone through, and altogether was rather of a Puseyite character; but the

singing defied description. A sort of negro precentor led the shrieking choir. The words of the hymns were woefully dragged, each line being subject to a three-fold repetition, with all the inflections characteristic of the methodist conventicle.

Next morning I went on horseback east for a few miles, and found the flat, bare coral rock everywhere protruding through the scanty soil. This route was more like a common than any other description of land, with stunted bushes or shrubs, and but little else. No wild cattle were to be seen.

Codrington Town contains, besides a good house for the manager, one for the clergyman, and another for the overseer, about a hundred cottages, numbering five hundred inhabitants, most of whom are employed on the island. Some of the young men go to Antigua, and ship in droghers; others into the lagoon, to fish for mullet, ten-pounders, and red-snappers, which are salted and carried to Antigua; and which is also supplied with its miserable apology for fire-wood from Barbuda.

The cash wages of Barbuda are very low—five-pence halfpenny sterling for the day's labour of a man, fourpence halfpenny for a woman, and fourpence for that of a girl; but each adult has a house, with ample grounds, rent free, and pays no taxes of any sort. He rears pigs and poultry, turkeys, geese, &c., and raises a profusion of yams and eddoes, most of which he sells. He has also the privilege of shooting the wild guinea-birds, ground pigeons, and other minor game. Venison

is only killed for the magnates, although the huntsman comes in for his share of the spoil. Altogether the negro population of Barbuda have nothing like real cares.

Indian-corn and Guinea-corn are raised on the island. There are no scattered houses, the policy being to concentrate the population as much as possible, and keep them under the eye of the manager. The negroes here are usually very civil. Several follow trades, such as wheelwrights, shoe-makers, or harness-makers; the latter, in addition, making leathern caps, antigropolis, and other equipments for the bush. There is a kind of negro doctor, who is also a tailor. House-flies, sand-flies, and mosquitoes are very troublesome, as well as centipedes and scorpions; but I believe there are no snakes.

The staple of Barbuda is wild cattle, about one hundred and twenty of which are sold every year in Antigua, some for estates which fetch about eight pounds each; those for killing averaging from three pounds to three pounds ten shillings only, or three-pence halfpenny per pound in gross, retailing at six-pence to eight-pence per pound. Barbuda has also a breed of small horses of local celebrity, many of which are wild.

At present Sir W. Codrington derives but little benefit from Barbuda, as the expenses usually swallow up the receipts.

On the 18th of December, I sailed up the lagoon to Man-of-war island, a mere clump of trees, frequented by birds of that name. The shores of the lagoon were

extremely low, showing on the westward or sand-bank side, only a few bushes and a white sandy beach: eastward the gently rising highlands are backed by stunted woods, eight or nine miles north. There is an intricate channel or creek opening into the high sea, and here the salvage from various wrecks furnishes an item in the island's revenue.

At daybreak, next morning, I rode to a hunt of wild cattle, to freight the drogher with Christmas beef for Antigua. Our road to the pen was as bad as bad could be for a mile; what was not sheer black rock being of a spongy black loam, and my horse stumbled every ten yards. I was followed by Mr. G—— slowly, for fear of an upset. We came on the ground at length, and, before I knew where I was, I was startled by the yells of men and the yelpings of a host of dogs, and saw a herd of cattle rushing down towards me. I dismounted in a trice and betook myself to a clump of trees, into which I climbed, and had hardly got up out of harm's way, when the whole of the wild animals rushed past close under my refuge, followed by the black huntsmen. My horse meanwhile grazed as quietly as if wild bulls did not exist.

We then got into the next field, when I heard another uproar and dismounted, and got on a stone wall six feet high, leaving my steed to take care of himself. Close to this wall came one of the wildest of cows, with tail erect and bellowing fearfully; under which circumstances they attack all who come in their way—the hunters following close after her. The plan

is, when the wild one is brought to bay by the dogs, for the men to rush in, catch hold of her tail and throw her down, when a tame ox is brought and linked to her by a strong chain. The captive shows fight, but is quickly dragged off by the decoy trained for the purpose, and obeying the voice of the huntsmen. Thus were four taken and sent off to the beach, each chained to the decoy.

I got home heartily tired. The hunters have five shillings a-month extra to any island labour they may do, and one shilling and sixpence each in addition for every head of wild cattle they may "tail" and drive into the pen. In this instance they could not get the cattle into the pen at all, so wild were they.

Barbuda is subject to great droughts, when all green things are burnt up and numberless cattle die. It has no rivers and the ponds are of brackish water at the best; so that, when these fail, the fate of the wild cattle is sealed.

I set off with Mr. G—— for Two Feet Bay, the north-eastern extremity of Barbuda, and about seven miles from our house.

We drove in a gig to the foot of the ascent to the Highland House, and two negro boys accompanied us on horseback with provisions, &c. From thence we were to go on the horses to the beach. Our road might be called a glade, winding through the stunted woods, and we sped along right merrily over the green sward. We came suddenly on a beautiful white mare and foal: she never moved from her place, but, with

head erect and flowing mane, stood boldly gazing at us as if half inclined to resent our intrusion. There was something surpassingly noble in her attitude and deportment. Passing on, we marooned under the walls of Highland House, now quite a ruin, though once the favourite seat of the Codringtons. Thence we obtained an extensive view over the country, which is very flat. We then mounted our horses and set off for the beach.

Our road was now much the same as before, though the glassy glade was more open, whilst the aloe and the cactus in its several varieties became more common. The melon (*Cactus communis*), or Turk's-head, grew to an enormous height. On our right rose the Highlands in masses of limestone rock, two hundred and five feet in height, ending to the north in a most extraordinary assemblage of disrupted rocks scattered over the beach, as if all Barbuda had tumbled over itself and fallen down here. In front was a furious sea, raging and bellowing in giant breakers over reefs extending as far as eye could reach. Indeed, ships will scarcely venture to sight Barbuda, so dangerous is its neighbourhood. This was Two Feet Bay.

Here the rocks were exquisitely romantic, rising in every variety of shape, fretted by the action of the elements into the most fantastic confusion. Above us, a hundred feet, lay a table-land formed by the tops of the brimstone cliffs, hollowed out below into immense caverns. Up to the top, however, we climbed, and

obtained a view of the wild scene and raging sea. Altogether, the scenery was most charming.

I heard a crushing in the bushes at the base of the rocks opening into Buckra's Cave, and Mr. G—— went in on horseback, when out rushed two wild cattle yelling fearfully, with their tails straight out, and shewing every other indication of terror. They made for the sea-shore, where we lost sight of them, much to my satisfaction, and gently threaded our way back. We encountered no game going or coming beyond a few doves.

The next day I visited Darby's Cave, about six miles north-east of the town. The road, due east from the Highland House, was a mass of uneven rock, over which, as we broke our way through the tangled copse, the horses slipped, in uncertain footing. The aloes were absolutely enormous, whilst the acacia stretched forth her spiny arms at great length, ready to scratch out our eyes. The *Echino cactus*, which is also prickly, abounded, as well as another disagreeable bush, the hog-wood, having a curious crinckley leaf armed with spines. Altogether, the bush is not a very pleasant locality to travel through.

The cave turned out to be an immense limestone bowl, a hundred feet deep, and from the bottom sprung a thicket of trees, festooned so thickly with parasites that even their forms were hidden, their tops being just below us. Down these precipices the wild cattle, hunted to despair, often plunge, and of course are

dashed to pieces. We scrambled down a precipitous descent, and certainly the scene from below was curious enough. Immense liands, or vegetable cordage, hung down from the rocks above; whilst the parasites were so thick as to form a decided feature. There was also bush, into which wild boars occasionally find their way. The wild boar, which is said to feed on the roots of the hog-wood, is more dreaded than the wild bull, as he often attacks without provocation.

Darby's Cave may be two hundred feet in length by a hundred and fifty in breadth. Some of the trees in it are of a tolerable size. The negro's lion is a drip-stone stalactite dropping water into a ruptured stagma-malite, the bowl evidently artificial, and holding about half a gallon of water.

I set off at daybreak on the following morning, with an experienced guide for Castle Hill House and Spanish Point, the longest journey Barbuda affords. This being accomplished, I should have traversed the island in all directions. Our road lay through woods and over a great deal of flat rock, honeycombed by the elements and environed by aloes, cactus and cashew; so that the travelling was decidedly tiresome, the horses requiring unremitted attention. There were no views whatever for nearly eight miles, but all thick bush. At length we scented the sea and emerged on a green sward, covered in all directions by the *Melo cactus*, looking ludicrously grotesque. Here the wild sheep appeared in flocks, scampering

away in affright like deer, which they so closely resembled that they would be set down for such by strangers. No wild cattle were to be seen, although the bush we had traversed was full of them. A few wild guinea birds were occasionally flushed, but no other game.

We came at length on the wild windward coast and arrived at Castle Hill House, a mere wattled cottage, now used to pen wild sheep in. Close by is a wooden hut, to shelter the watchman, who occasionally visits this spot to look after evil-doers from Antigua, in the shape of sheep stealers. It appears that so gregarious are negroes, no black man or family could be induced to inhabit this beautiful but sequestered spot. Indeed, it would require "music in the soul" to do so. The educated man bears solitude far better than the negro.

Three miles further brought us to Spanish Point Castle, the southern extremity of Barbuda and eleven miles from the village.

Our road lay for the greater part over a level green sward, dotted over with clumps of bushes so beautifully arranged by nature, as to resemble more an English park than an uninhabited district of a wild island in the Tropics. Each sylvan glade had its family of wild sheep, amongst which were some magnificent rams, looking very fierce and patriarchal. They were much browner than the ewes. This was the lambing season, and the lambs were leaping and frisking about with their

proverbial joyousness. The sheep are very wild, bounding off in alarm at the appearance of man. This ride altogether was very pleasant.

We came to a flash, or shallow lagoon of salt-water where bay-salt is occasionally gathered, though it would hardly seem that much attention was paid to it. This flash was about half a mile long by a quarter in breadth. Rounding a sedgy flat, often evidently under water, we came in sight of the castle, a droll caricature of a Martello tower, erected on a slight eminence overlooking Spanish Point, as the long low promontory nearly level with the sea is called. It is the south-easternmost extremity of Barbuda and the nearest land to Antigua, the mountains of which, due south, are distinctly visible. It is renowned as the scene of shipwrecks.

Spanish Point is not a particularly interesting spot. The castle was locked, and, of course, my negro had forgotten to bring the key, so we had to go down to a water-hole in the rock to eat our lenten-fare of bread and cheese. These holes, containing perhaps a gallon, are very numerous and extremely dangerous to horses. They are usually partly covered with stones. The water, though sweet, is full of animalculæ.

On our return we skirted two very extensive flashes, having no apparent communication with the sea. The way was monotonous enough as we plodded wearily over the heavy black loam or slippery rock. I saw a beautiful wild horse and mare, which stood and gazed

at us with apparent wonder. I thought of the Houyhnhums and the Yahoos.

A short ride brought us to Bull's Hole, a lovely little lakelet, skirted by gentle green lawns. It is, as its name implies, a grand rendezvous for the wild cattle.

We got back to the village by half-past two, after a ride of twenty-two miles in the Tropics; and I had visited all the sights of Barbuda with the exception of one, bearing the mystic name of Dark Cave, the very whereabouts of which is involved in considerable obscurity. The negroes are afraid to enter it on account of the jumbees, and adventurous white visitors have been so baffled in their attempts at exploration, that I was obliged, after many inquiries, to abandon the idea of a visit to the forbidden spot.

The negro population of Barbuda does not differ essentially from negroes elsewhere. They are very civil but steal wherever they can, and, when detected, make satirical songs on the manager for stopping their pay.

In gathering Indian or Guinea-corn, the negresses truss up their dresses in a curious manner, forming a pouch in front, into which as many heads of corn are stuffed as can be stolen unperceived. They are generally followed closely by a youngster of the family, as a gleaner, to whom all the spoil is transferred. Twenty or thirty women, each stealing six of the immense cobs of corn daily for a week or ten days, will obtain in the

aggregate a considerable sweep, and their pay is stopped whenever detected. Then a song is immediately made on the poor manager: "He 'top me pay for *one* head of *carn*," making him out to be a very hard taskmaster. Mr. Godwin, the present manager, is an excellent and most conscientious person, and has a most amiable wife. The clergyman, Mr. Culpepper, a Barbadian, has done great good to the black population by stopping to a great degree their incessant quarrels, in which all the bad passions of their nature break out. The overseer, Mr. P——, is one of those adventurous spirits scattered over the West Indies, and seems particularly suited to rule a population only kept in subjection by moral force and courage.

Christmas time is the grand saturnalia of the negroes at Barbuda. No work is done, and nothing goes on but dancing to the tum-tum from ten o'clock in the morning until nine at night. Then it is that the barbarian comes out. Such dancing and such dressing. The dandies surpass those of Regent Street. Boys, wearing for the rest of the year only a scanty ragged blue shirt, turn out in elegant Minory-tailor's caps, such as only Moses and Son could fabricate. Drogher sailors, usually luxuriating in red-woollen shirts, now appear in long-tailed, shore-going black coats, Byron collars, very tight white trowsers, and Wellingtons, and become the D'Orsays of Barbuda. On such occasions, the Spanish flounces of the negro wash-women, or field belles, can only be equalled in absurdity by the rusty

black-silk polka jackets of the Antiguan huckster mulattoes, on Sundays.

Barbuda is in many respects an interesting island. Some situations are indeed lovely; but the want of water is severely felt. Could a white community supersede the black one, Barbuda, with its freedom from the conventionalities of life, would be a most desirable spot for retirement and study.

CHAPTER XVI.

RETURN TO ANTIGUA—VISIT TO RAT ISLAND—THE LEPER HOSPITAL—LYNCH'S ESTATE—CADE'S BAY—GREEN CASTLE—ANTIGUAN OFFICIALS—THE MORAVIAN SETTLEMENT—EARTHQUAKE—A MODEST REQUEST—DEPARTURE FOR ENGLAND.

On the 30th of December I left Barbuda for Antigua. The ideas of gentility of the coloured people here are most droll. "He quite a gentleman, Sir," was applied by a *quasi* white woman to an old negro, a *ci-devant* cook, who was rather a decent old fellow. "Dat gentleman," will mean a black porter, whilst a white gentleman will be called "ole man." The only way to get on in the West Indies, is to repress all this at once. Then they get frightened and respect you, and ultimately like you the better for it.

Coloured men are very fond of being editors of newspapers, as it increases their importance in the eyes of their own race. As might be imagined, from their general ignorance and want of education, the papers, though scurrilous enough, are miserable specimens of

imbecility. Yet it is from these papers that extracts are usually printed in England. The printers here are always so incompetent, that of any article they have to print scarcely one word is correctly spelt. Yet their conceit passes all bounds.

A party of coloured people were allowed to subscribe to the excellent library in St. John's, the librarian of which is as morose and grumpy a mulatto as one can well meet—barely civil, and never obliging. About fourteen of these dingy fellows got in, and by intrigue obtained a majority in the general meeting, the consequence of which is, that from ignorance and conceit, everything is mis-managed,—the surly custode, of course, bearing out his own colour.

There is one street in St. John's known as Scotch Row, from its being inhabited chiefly by Scotch shopkeepers, who are mighty *nonchalant* in manner, whilst their shopboys, mostly from some high flat in the Gallogate, are often absolutely rude, invariably omitting the "Sir," when addressing a customer, and bandying about the "yes" and "no," in terms of offensive familiarity. They are lazy withal. One morning at half-past six, an hour when in the Tropics all mankind ought to have been up, I walked out to make a purchase, and found not a single store open. At last one solitary shopman drove into town in his gig! Thus are trading matters managed in Antigua. Several of the merchants are confirmed drunkards. One, for a week at a time, is never sober; another rarely quits his bed, but lies drinking rum and porter from morn

'till dewy eve, and eve 'till morn again. Canny Scotland indeed seldom shews itself to advantage in the West Indies.

At the beginning of February I went with Dr. Adam Nicholson, Secretary to the Board of Health, to visit the lunatic asylum on Rat Island. The rooms are extremely clean and comfortable, and the patients are most kindly treated and well cared for. One nearly white woman had been in confinement six years. She was very pale, and had large luxurious black eyes, well-defined eyebrows, *bien prononcée*, and the *ensemble* was very handsome. Her hair was quite grey, and she reminded me of one of the guillotined ladies of the revolution; but as she was very treacherous as well as violent, I got out of her way as soon as I decently could. The rest of the patients were merely restless, vituperative negresses. The only white man wished to go into "holy orders," for which he said he had qualified himself in his three years' confinement. He was extremely gentle and urbane in manner, but quite capable of killing any one who gave him a chance, so that Dr. Nicholson always faced him in retiring from his cell. One really quiet old man made a great deal of money by basket-making. He was perfectly inoffensive, and generally quite sane, having only occasionally some odd notions. If all mankind were tested by such a criterion, the whole world would be but one vast *maison de santé*. However, he had been confined ten years, and being much better cared for here than he would have been outside, had no wish to recover his freedom. The rest

were negroes, sometimes violent, but never so outrageous as the females. One black girl of sixteen had eroto mania from disappointment in love. The views from the asylum were extremely beautiful.

Hence I went to the Lazzaretto and leper hospital. All the world has heard of lepers, but few know exactly what the disease actually is. Leprosy as known to the ancient writers, is probably extinct; but at present it appears in about eight phases, of which the principal are, elephantiasis and the lion face, a hideous physiognomy. The rest are cutaneous eruptions. Some sufferers have their noses eaten off; many are without toes and fingers, with shockingly attenuated limbs. The hospital presented a loathsome spectacle, although every possible attention was paid to cleanliness and comfort.

We next visited the infirmary, a spacious quadrangle surrounded by wards, and having on one side detached huts for the houseless poor. Cleanliness and comfort prevailed throughout. The western ward was appropriated to merchant seamen.

A bill was brought into the House of Assembly, on the 20th of February, 1851, for the punishment of obea, or poisoning, which crime is greatly on the increase in Antigua. During the division, I noticed that whenever a coloured member (for there are six) proposed any alteration or amendment, it was of so puerile a nature as to be laughed down instanter. In other respects, propriety was observed throughout the debate.

Almost every negro and coloured man has a flute, on

which he nightly makes the most horrid noises. Not one that I have heard can play even decently, and the babel of squealing sounds makes night hideous. The black man is the great curse of these otherwise beautiful countries.

It is a curious fact, that there is scarcely a negress but has one foot ulcerated from leprosy. This foot is invariably tied up in a collection of filthy rags, and thrust into a man's old shoe-*razee*, which is dragged along the ground to keep it on. Almost every negro has a puffed instep, often ulcerating, from the same cause.

In treating their ailments negroes adhere obstinately to their own customs. I sent one, a good negro, to a medical friend of mine, for a chronic ulcer on the instep. He went to the doctor once, but neither applied to his foot that which was ordered (a simple poultice), nor would he go for advice again. Such are even the best negroes. They generally bind plantain leaves round the head, as a remedy for headache, or to ulcers, to "kip dem foot cool." It is needless to say that the benefit imputed to this application is only imaginary.

I have carefully noted the voices of negresses, especially of young girls and of children, and, with scarcely an exception in Antigua, they are hoarse, harsh, and broken,—very loud and piercing certainly, but of a most grating tone. So many assertions have been made about the soft voices of negresses, that I paid

particular attention to the subject. Sometimes indeed the coloured people, seemingly aware of the defect, speak to strangers for a little while in a low tone, or within their voices; but left to themselves nature speaks out in unmistakable accents.

No man of education, and with the habits of decent society, will live in the Tropics unless compensated for what he has to endure by great pecuniary advantages. He has to sustain the wear of life, twice as great as elsewhere, and the extra expenses of clothing and of living, inseparable from tropical life with the wants of respectable society, and of all the *agrémens* of European life, are all great evils; and, in fact, an Englishman here is isolated in the midst of barbarians.

Some foolish people at home have spoken of the necessity of the planter of past times coming down to a tropical agriculturist, as if a parallel could be drawn between an English farmer and a West Indian planter. Sugar making is a purely scientific process, so scientific indeed, that chemists in the Tropics find it a *vexata questio* still; and only an intellectual man can properly overlook his estate or farm. Wherever ploughmen have become planters, as in Trinidad, everything connected with sugar making is done in the most slovenly manner, and indifferent sugar is necessarily produced. Such men also have not the means to do things properly, even if they tried to improve, which but few of them have the ambition to do. Generally speaking, they live from hand to mouth, on the axiom of "let

well alone." They secure but a miserable subsistence, and, indifferent to even the decencies of life, ultimately sink into poverty, and become mere overseers. Meantime sugar making goes to the wall.

If, as at present, resident owners lose only a quarter of a dollar on every hogshead of sugar that they manufacture, it is clear that if they make fifty, they lose fifty shillings. The more they make, therefore, the more they lose. Such a state of things will not repay intelligent men for living amongst barbarians.

It has been asserted that the mode of making sugar is unscientific; grant that, as far as a chemical operation can be unscientific, it is so, still we must ask in what laboratory the planter is to gain the requisite knowledge, when even the chemists themselves do not agree? Again, how is the poor planter to pay a scientific man one hundred and fifty pounds a-year, to superintend sugar-making for him, when he cannot pay his ordinary expenses? If it could be done, what man of sufficient science would accept so paltry a remuneration? Would any qualified man give up all chance of advancement elsewhere for such a stipend, and live here bereft of society, a perfect outcast? Twelvemonths in the tropics, in any of the West Indian islands, would soon undeceive both our economists and philanthropists.

It has been urged by some, that the negro and not the white man is the proper lord of the soil in the West Indies. This is a monstrous absurdity. How can tribes planted by the Creator four thousand miles off

be the proper inhabitants of the Antilles? No! we have nearly annihilated the rightful possessors, the yellow Caribs, far superior in intellect to the African. They it was who originally inhabited this portion of the globe, but the white man, as he could not subdue, virtually destroyed them. The Indian races shun the negro, and fly into the recesses of the forest, alike from the black as from the white man. That white men can and do work well, with certain precautions, in the Tropics, Puerto Rico, originally cultivated by Spanish convicts, is of itself a proof. That negroes cannot progress in the scale of humanity, Hayti furnishes ample evidence.

I went with Mr. Leroux Nugent, inspector of roads, to visit Lynch's estate, the extreme windward estate of the island. The general aspect of the country was hilly, the canes looked good and the works excellent. The houses of the owners, or of the managers, were perched on the summits of the different hills, as well for health as to overlook the works without the trouble of going out. Windmills are in general use in Antigua. The roads are *carrozzabile* throughout the island; and at present about one hundred and fifty pounds a month is expended in bringing them into good order by my indefatigable friend Nugent, who has been brought up regularly in England as an engineer, a very uncommon advantage in the West Indies; where all such offices are usually given to self-taught bunglers, as jobs, or through interest, the real reason why things have hitherto been so badly done.

Five miles and a-half from St. John's we came to the Royal Oak, a half tavern, half huckster's, where ale, spirits, and bread and cheese could be obtained; but there was no room to go into, and of course no beds—so wretchedly is everything done here. Still a country public-house of any sort is desirable in the West Indies.

From one cause or another, one third of Antigua is uncultivated. Many of the proprietors are on the brink of ruin, unable to raise money to plant canes; and, beyond cultivating sugar, none of them have an idea of turning their land to account. Cotton planting, so advantageous to poor people as it requires no expensive machinery, they are too apathetic to attend to. Ground provisions, as yams, cabbages, fruits, medical herbs and other things, they would rather import than raise. Some estates are cultivated on shares with the negroes, but it does not answer; for, when the negro gets a few pounds, he becomes insolent, will not work, and is altogether too independent.

Some of the views *en route* were very beautiful. Parham Harbour with its islands, and the view from St. Stephen's Church over Willoughby Bay, the Ridge, the Sugar-loaf and the Sheckerley mountains, with the intermediate valley, were extremely interesting.

We were hospitably received at Lynch's, a very large estate of upwards of three hundred acres; but so wretchedly mismanaged last year as to produce only twenty-five hogsheads of sugar! The new manager, a brother of my friend, had only been two days on the

estate. It should be understood that not above seventy or eighty acres of an estate are under cane cultivation at one time; more would be unmanageable, and the ground also must lie fallow. The plough is used in Antigua. Lynch's estate employs upwards of seventy negroes.

Next day I went round the valley with Mr. N—— to inspect the roads. This circuit includes the great sight of Antigua, Fig-tree Hill.

On the right of the road, near Green Castle, are two precipitous mountains called the Jumbee Mountains, towering above the York estate, which are very conspicuous and singular. When at Jolly Hill, we came upon the sea-bord and kept it all the way to Old Road Town.

From the various reefs and shallow waters round Antigua, the sea is peculiarly beautiful, being of a light emerald green. Monserrat, Redonda, Nevis, and sometimes St. Kitts are in sight, whilst, between the road and the sea, are several salt water lagoons teeming with fish. On the left are the Sheckerley Mountains, green and wooded. Bogie Hill, above Cade's Bay, according to the survey of Captain Burnet of H.M.S. Thunder, is thirteen hundred feet above the sea. This is the highest ground in the island. We lunched at Cade's Bay, encircled by an ancient amphitheatre of hills, with Mr. Lipscombe, the attorney for the estate, a magistrate, who somehow or other has become obnoxious to the negroes. Two months before, they had burnt down his house and did damage to the extent of one thousand

pounds sterling. Mr. Lipscombe is in constant dread of poison from obea, and scarcely dares to drink a glass of water. Such are negroes, the savages that we have let loose upon our own countrymen. Obea is greatly on the increase.

At Old Road Town, a mere hamlet surrounding the parish church, the road turned off to the left through a pretty valley, and half a mile brought us to Fig-tree Hill, which hitherto no Antiguan has been intelligent enough to describe intelligibly. Some call it a dell, others a rocky precipice, very steep: it is simply a pass between a range of wooded mountains, having on the left, as we ascended, the rocky bed of a mountain stream, at this time nearly dry, but which, after rains, is doubtless furious enough. The woods on the right or seabord were said to be full of wild hogs, wild cattle, goats, sheep and cats, which had strayed from the neighbouring estates and run wild. The hogs and bulls were described as being particularly dangerous, attacking all that came in their way.

From the valley, the top of the pass may be eight hundred feet in height, certainly not less. Being too steep for driving, we walked up, leaving the horse and gig to follow. The road is good and pretty enough, but the pass itself affords no extensive view, nor by any means realizes the exaggerated encomiums lavished on it by the Antiguans. At the top of the pass, the mountains rise several hundred feet above the road. We climbed to the summit of those on the east, and were rewarded with a magnificent view of nearly all Antigua.

These mountains are inhabited, and cultivated nearly to their tops in provision grounds. In one patch are some of the largest cabbages that I ever saw, for which we were asked a shilling a-piece. The negro owner said that he could insure ten-pence a-piece in the market. He paid the proprietor two pounds a-year for the ground; so that forty cabbages, raised comparatively without trouble, paid his rent; so easily do these people live! They all keep hogs, fowls and guinea-birds; which latter fetch a dollar a-pair, often five shillings. A great deal is also made by stealing the canes at night, and selling them cut into lengths in the market. Negroes often plant a few canes on a patch close to their huts as a sort of blind; but for every load of their own which they carry to market, two are stolen. It is calculated that one-fourth of the canes throughout the West Indies are lost by robbery, and indeed you seldom meet a negro wench without seeing her sucking a sugar cane, stripping the silicated rind with her teeth. The people living in these hills had a bad reputation as obea men.

By the route we came, Fig-tree Hill is fifteen miles from St. John's, although in our way back we had only nine miles to go to reach the city.

Passing Sawcolts, some of the hills were extremely steep. Five miles brought us to Green Castle, and to the ample hospitality of its proprietor, Mr. Law, we did great justice. This is the prettiest tour in Antigua.

Some communities are conspicuous for their re-

spectability, others are notorious for their vice, but the general opinion here is, that Monserrat is the most disreputable place in the West Indies. There seems to be no villainy, no rascality, which the white inhabitants do not practice on each other, and on the others whom they chance to meet. This is particularly the case with the official people placed in authority, and by authority, over negroes and their fellow whites, as their moral guides. They are swindlers, drunkards, and debauchees. The highest in position are commonly spoken of as the "artful dodgers," and publicly shown up in Wilmer and Smith's "European Times," as notorious defaulters. What shall we say to those moral ministers at home, who, affecting to be conscientious, and even pious, keep such notorious reprobates in high places. Of three Monserrat men whom I met, two were infamous for their utter want of principle and character. The third was an exceedingly forward, fast young man, associating apparently with all the *mauvais sujets* of Antigua.

The law enacted in the case of the officials of Canada, compelling every public servant to put aside a definite portion of his salary to pay his debts, ought trebly to be applied to the official men of the West Indies, most of whom, from their position, cheat their creditors with impunity. These unprincipled men, often public defaulters, but possessing interest enough to get their defalcation hushed up, are better off, in comparison, than any other class out here, and their incomes do not fluctuate like those of planters or

merchants. Of late years their salaries have increased —say fifty per cent; yet do many of them run deeply into debt, and then set their creditors at defiance.

Poverty prevails very extensively in Antigua, especially amongst the higher and the middle classes, not officials. The planter scarcely knows how to scrape the money together to pay his labourers their weekly wages, yet his pride is so great, that he will not abate one iota of his apparent luxury. The failing of all classes, indeed, is to be grand in public, pinching at home.

The negroes, who never trust anybody, live genetally rent free, and have little expense, are generally well off. The want of principle amongst all classes, except a few of the very highest in the British West Indies, is painfully apparent every hour of the day. The coloured people and negroes do not seem to know what principle means. This is particularly noticeable in housekeeping; of any money that you may give to purchase anything, the change is kept back as long as possible, in hopes that you may forget it, and when inquired for it, is never brought correctly, a squabble is the result. It is in vain that you have recourse to figures; a coloured person will try to swear you out of your senses. Even the ruler of a neighbouring island has been impaled in Wilmer and Smith's "European Times," as a defaulter. This magnate bears a very ignoble reputation wherever he is known.

The coloured people are straining every nerve to get

into the high places, so far, indeed, as to assume that no Englishman, however long he may have been settled in the island, has any right to share privileges, exclusively, as they assert, belonging to them as people of colour. Such was the substance of a speech made in the House of Assembly by a coloured man, the son of a white man by a slave, and himself born a slave.

I went over to the Moravian settlement, four miles on the south-west, or valley road. Though quite a stranger, I was most kindly received by the Rev. M. Hamilton, the Principal.

An interesting experiment is being worked out here. Twenty-five negro and coloured boys are boarded, lodged and clothed, and isolated for about seven years from the pernicious example of the degraded population, amongst which they were born, in order to see what the negro can or will do, under the influences of civilization. It is the intention of the society, if possible, to make them useful working members of the community, and their education is of a thoroughly practical nature. It embraces reading, writing and arithmetic, as also the rudiments of natural history, geography, &c. They are then, for a portion of their time, occupied in agricultural labour, clearing the ground, and planting cotton and the common tropical vegetables; so that if anything can be made of the negro this will do it. All over the world Moravian establishments are conspicuous for their neatness, and

this one does no discredit to their universal character. Everything, though plain, is scrupulously neat. The writing of the boys was extremely good, and they are each taught the rudiments of drawing. The dormitory was spacious and airy, and the boys slept on mattrasses on the floor. Lavatories are provided, and they dine in a spacious refectorium. There is a miniature chapel in the institution, with an organ, so that every arrangement is most complete. It is the intention of the society to educate the more intelligent of the pupils as teachers, or missionaries. What the peculiar religious tenets of the Moravians may be I do not know, and did not ask. I found Mr. Hamilton a shrewd, practical man; he admitted, that breaking the negro of stealing and lying was hard work.

The situation of the establishment is exceedingly beautiful; half encircled by the Sheckerly mountains to the left, and the Jumbee hills to the right, with the sea in front, and Redonda rock and Nevis in the distance, while the foreground is a plain, partly planted with canes. The rest is moor, covered with scrub, though capable of improvement, did the funds of the trammelled planter permit.

At five o'clock A.M., on April 8th, there was a smart shock of earthquake, which lasted many seconds; the quivering and creaking of the house was rather alarming, and I had some idea of running into the yard, but before I made up my mind, all was over. I find that that which has been stated by travellers in South

America is true here; that the longer one remains in an earthquake country, the more susceptible and timid one becomes. The present case, however, was the smartest shock I had yet experienced.

After an interval of a fortnight, I went once more to the Moravian settlement at Bermuda Valley, and saw the neophytes in school. One class was writing out geometrical definitions; I thought the hand-writing very good for their ages, from seven to ten years. Another class was learning to write, on a most extraordinary principle, and one which I cannot think good. It will be best understood, by supposing a monitor to call out "pot-hook," "hanger," or "curve with a tail," and "curve without a tail," though these were not the actual words used. The consequence is, that the formation of the letters, though quite correct, is quite mechanical, and is done without any reference to their character as letters. The children were then drawn out in a line, and questioned in geography, when, as a mere effort of memory, the answers were astonishingly correct.

"What country is that which lies in the north-east of Africa?" was demanded.

"Egypt," was the simultaneous shout.

Its far-famed river, with its direction, and chief cities, were all correctly answered. The Mediterranean, its islands, volcanoes, &c., were all named. Yet I could not but be struck with the obvious fact, that all this was parrot-like, a mere effort of memory, in which

intellect had no part. Indeed, as a general rule, mechanical excellence can be attained in exact proportion to the absence of the higher intelligence, or mental quality. This may be well exemplified by the fact, that the black, or coloured tailors, can never cut out clothes well, because to do so requires a certain amount of intellect; but the mere putting together, the working of the button-holes, and so forth, will be better done than in Europe. But whatever may be the result of the experiment at Bermuda Valley, the mere schooling does infinite credit to the care and energy of the teachers. Of the twenty-five pupils who, by the bye, manœuvred with military precision, at least one-third seemed to me to have an imbecile, or idiotic expression. Intelligence in facial expression was decidedly in favour of the few yellow boys. The negro boys invariably roll their eyes all round the compass before they are in a condition to answer a question. I thought of the benevolence which suggested such an attempt to improve the negro; of the noble devotion of those who so well worked out the principle; but I despaired of the results. Let us wish it well.

About this time I was told of a ludicrous instance of the self-importance, ignorance, and folly of the coloured tribes, which occurred in Antigua. A mulatto baker, a very troublesome fussy personage in St. John's, waited on Sir W. Colebrook, the late Governor, to beg for His Excellency's custom, and also to be made *aid de camp!* and became furious when his modest request was

civilly declined. This knight of the flour-bin is, from his conceit, a very troublesome member of the community; finding fault with everything said or done by his superiors, yet without the brains to suggest an improvement or supply a deficiency. This is the general characteristic of those negroes in mind with yellow skins, who assert a social equality with the highest class whites. Utterly ignorant of all beyond the most common-place topics of everyday life, they are, at the same time, positively incapable of taking part in a conversation on such subjects as form the usual themes of discussion in respectable society.

Each island of the West Indian group seems to have its idiosyncrasy of condition or climate; some peculiarity apart from the rest. Thus, June and July in Antigua are the "thunder months," elementary disturbances scarcely ever heard further south—and rattling crashing thunder it is, accompanied by torrents of rain! Scarcely a night passed during the last fortnight of my stay, without three or four violent demonstrations of electricity. I must also add that Antigua has another less agreeable peculiarity developed by the hot weather—namely, myriads of bugs. They are said to come over in the lumber from the United States, but why are they not naturalized equally in the other islands? I ought in justice to say that I never yet saw a flea here.

My health had by this time completely broken down, and I had no alternative but to get away.

America was not to be thought of; so once more I turned my eyes towards Old England. On July the 24th, 1851, I embarked on board a large lumbering bark of three hundred and seventy-three tons, commanded by a captain who was one of the greatest ruffians I ever had the misfortune to encounter, and, after a nine weeks' passage, landed on September 26th, at Gravesend, just in time to see the wonder of wonders, the Crystal Palace.

THE END.

LONDON:
Printed by Schulze and Co., 13, Poland Street.